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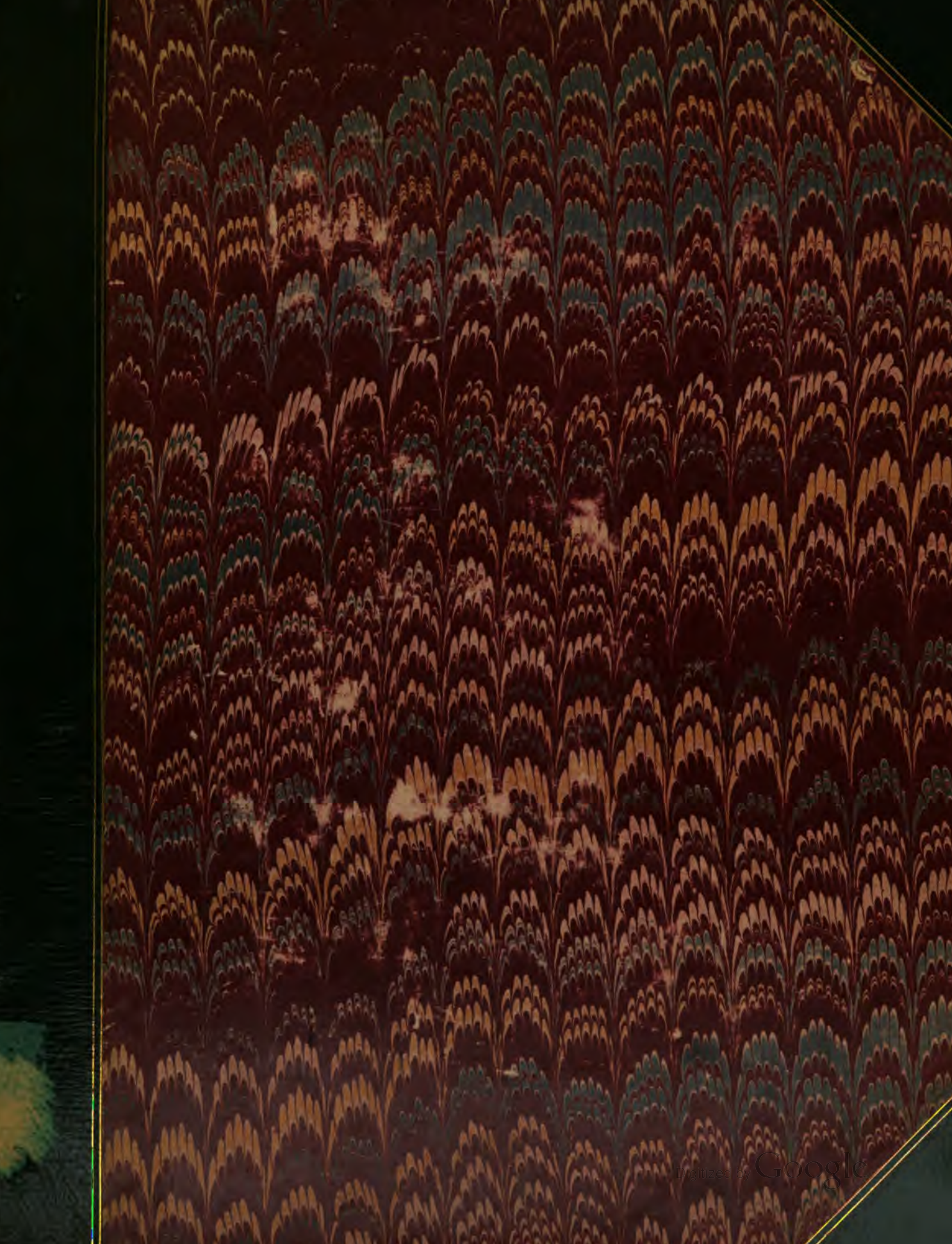
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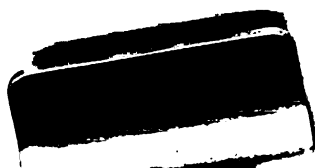
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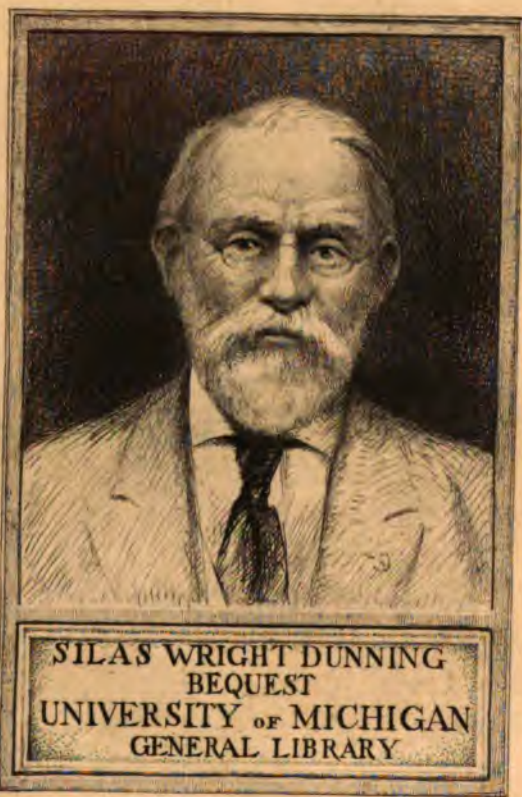
Sir George Henry Scott Douglas, Gt



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no. 44



SIR BEVES OF HAMTOUN.

The Romance of



Sir Beves of Hamtoun.

*Maitland Club, Glasgow
Publications*

SIR BEVES OF HAMTOUN:

A METRICAL ROMANCE.

NOW FIRST EDITED FROM THE AUCHINLECK MS.



PRINTED AT EDINBURGH:

M.DCCC.XXXVIII.

EDINBURGH PRINTING COMPANY.

PRESENTED

TO THE

Members of the Maitland Club

BY

WILLIAM B.D.D. TURNBULL.

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his *oppression*, banded against him, with the *fragments* of the *English-men*, the strength of *Hastings* the *Dane*, and all the assistance the *Welch* could afford; in whose country a battel was fought near *Carcliffe*, against the *Normans*, anno Domini 1070, wherein *Three Nations* were conquered by *One*. *Beavois* being worsted (*Success* depends not on *Valour*), fled to *Carlile* (a long step from *Carcliffe*); and afterwards no mention what became of him.

“ This is that *Beavois* whom the monks cried up to be *such a man*, that since it hath been questioned whether ever *such a man*, I mean, whether ever his person was *in rerum natura*; so ingenious those are, who, in the reports of any man’s performances, exceed the *bounds* of *probability*.

“ All I will add is this, that the sword preserved and shewed to be this *Beavoises* in Arundel-Castle, is lesser (perchance worn with age) than that of King Edward the Third, kept in Westminster-church.”

So far plain *History*. The *Fiction* will probably prove more attractive.

The metrical version contained in the following pages is now for the first time printed from the Auchinleck Manuscript, in the Advocates’ Library. It is No. 26 in the volume, and occupies twenty-five folios, complete. After the first three leaves, the versification changes into rhyming couplets, and continues throughout in the same measure. By an omission on the part of the writer of the manuscript, the thread of the narrative is

interrupted at page 89 (of the printed copy), and the defect is here supplied from the prose version of 1689, which in this and other places varies considerably from the metrical.

The prose romance informs us that King "JOUR" being gone a-hunting, when Bevis arrived at the city of Mombraunt, it was agreed between Josian and the latter, that, "upon her declaring her self to be a pure virgin, that the King being absent, he should take her thence to any land, where ever he pleased, and thereupon ordered at his request, her Page to fetch his horse Arundel (who hearing his Master's voice had broke his chains) his Sword Morglay, and his Armour he left in the City, and to prepare her Equipage instantly; which being all in a readiness they mounted, and mounting the Page, who would accompany his Queen, upon the Horse Sir Bevis left in the Inn, they with much joy and secrecy departed the City; but far had not they gone, but they perceived the Country in pursuit of them, upon notice the Queen was missing; whereupon Sir Bevis would have turned back, to have fought the pursuers, whilst the Queen and her Page, might have opportunity to escape; but she being as careful of his safety, as her own, would not consent; but rather chose to make what speed they could out of the Territories of the King; and so successful they were, that by passing through Forrests and By-ways, they lost the pursuers; but now night coming on, and the Queen being weary, and no house near, they were obliged to take up their lodging in a Rocky cave: But whilst Sir Bevis was gone in search of such provision as that wild place afforded, a Lyon and a Lyoness entred, it being it seems the place of their repose, to defend them against whom,

Boniface the Queens Page drew his sword, and maintained a stout Combat, in hope Sir Bevis might in the mean time come to his rescue ; but he not doing it, and the other proving too weak, was immediately devoured ; but the Queen protected by her Royalty, as the Daughter of a King, and her unspotted Virginity remained safe ; but no sooner Sir Bevis approached the Cave, but she cryed out to him to fly and save his life, giving him to understand the danger, and what else had happened, but his dauntless courage could not be afraid, for resolutely entering, as suspecting his fair Mistress in more danger than she was, he came upon them with such fury, that after a long Combat, not without receiving several gripes and wounds, he laid them dead at her feet ; and by this he was farther confirmed that she had preserved her Virginity, notwithstanding she had been seven years a Bride, and thereupon enquired with intermixtures of many tender kisses, by what means she had done it, who accordingly told him how it happened : and so having refreshed themselves with some Venison he had brought, which they roasted in the Cave, the fair Queen, such is the power of love, condescending to cook it. The next morning, when the Sun-beams began to dart from the East, they mounted and kept on their way." Of this virginal paction,—the devouring of poor Boniface,—and the sylvan *cuisine*, we are deprived by the scribe of the Auchinleck MS.

It is worthy of note, that the romance of Sir Bevis affords the only proof—but a satisfactory one—of the existence of female itinerant minstrels in the middle ages. This is shown by M. Paulin Paris to have been the case in the two most

highly cultivated centuries of romantic poetry ; and in support of his assertion, he cites the French metrical version, which appears to have been written about the middle of the 13th century. The passage may be found in *l'Histoire Littéraire de la France*, tom. xviii. p. 701 ; and the incident therein alluded to occurs, though by no means so explicitly detailed, at page 148 of this volume.

M. Amaury Duval is of opinion (*Hist. Litt. de la France*, xviii. 749), that the romance of Sir Bevis is of French extraction, and borrowed thence by the English ; and that instead of Southampton in Britain, our hero was lord of *Antonne*, or some other town of a similar name, in France. His words are as follow :—

“ Il parait que le roman de Beuves de Hanstone eut un long succès. Ou en trouve des manuscrits dans nombre de bibliothèques, et les Anglais le traduisirent dans leur langue, mais en changeant le théâtre des événements, le lieu de la scène, on plutôt en s'appropriant tout le sujet. Beuves, dans leur traduction, n'est plus seigneur suzerain de Hanstone, mais bien de Southampton dans le Hantshire.

“ Peut-être on nous demandera ou nous plaçons, nous, le duché de Hanstone, ce duché que le roman français appelle *la terre*, les états de Beuves. Nous répondrons qu'on peut choisir entre *Antonne*, dans le département de la Dordogne, près de Périgueux, et quatre à cinq autres villes et bourgs d'un nom à

peu près semblable dans les anciennes provinces du Dauphiné, du Perche, et même de l'Orléanais."

Warton seems to incline to a like view. "*BEUVES de Hanton*, or *Sir Beavis of Southampton*," says he (*Hist. Eng. Poetry*, i. 145, 8vo. ed.), "is a French romance of considerable antiquity, although the hero is not older than the Norman Conquest. It is alluded to in our English romance on this story, which will again be cited, and at large.

"Forth thei yode *so saith the boke*.

"And again more expressly,

"Under the bridge wer sixty belles,
Right as the *Romans* telles.

"The *Romans* is the French original. It is called the Romance of *Beuves de Hanton*, by Pere Labbe, &c. &c."

For my own part, I concur with both; but the point is, on the whole, of comparative indifference. The romances of chivalry, like all other tales of fiction, appear to flow from one common source, and are modified by the various impressions of their rehearsers, or the manners of the soil whence their greatest popularity was obtained.

In the following pages, the reader will perceive a singular re-

semblance between the fate of Bevis' stepfather, Divoun, and that of Lord Soulis, in the Border Minstrelsy.

The bibliography of this romance is so extensive, that in order to avoid a dry detail of MSS., or editions, I refer the reader to Ferrario, *Storia ed Analisi Degli Antichi Romanzi di Cavalleria*, tom. iv.—to the *Catalogue des Manuscrits dans la Bibliothèque du Roi*,—Lhuyd's *Archæologia Britannica*,—the works of Ellis, Lowndes, Warton,—and the other numerous publications bearing upon the subject. An analysis of the romance were absolutely a work of supererogation, as the volume, it is hoped, is not destined to blockheads; and, should it unfortunately lapse into the hands of such, no summary or exegesis could possibly "lighten their darkness."

For the extremely elegant and appropriate frontispiece I am indebted to the pencil of my friend CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE, Esq., whose graphic abilities are only equalled by his uniform courtesy and kindness. A faithful fac-simile of the original manuscript is also prefixed.

The romance of Bevis' father, Sir Guy of Warwick, has been transcribed from the same MS. and is about to be printed for that very flourishing and remarkably select association—the ABOTSFORD CLUB.

To conclude, in the words of the Editor of the prose romance of 1689,—

“ COURTEOUS READER,

“ I here present you with the pleasant History of the Famous and Renowned Knight, Sir *Bevis of Southampton*, a Man for his Virtue and Valour, highly esteemed throughout the World: In whose many Actions and glorious Achievements, you will find things that may reasonably surmount an ordinary credit; however in perusing them, you may plainly perceive the difference between Elder times and these we live in, which are too much divolved into effeminacy, and please your self in consulting the many rare Adventures of such, as gave themselves up to the practice of Arms and Love, which being mingled in their many excellencies, appear as beautiful and gay as a Bed of Roses and Lillies, in their blushing Glory and innocent Candure, and as the noble Enterprizes of others have stirred up the Spirits of such as read them, to an illustrious imitation of what is truly great, and held in the highest esteem: So past all peradventure, what is here laid down, will not come behind the most exalted Actions of Heroes, set forth to the advantage, either in Love or Arms, those two Excellencies that adorn mankind; for here you will find our Champion, though early crushed by the adverse hand of Fortune, making his way to Glory, before he could aspire to Manhood, cutting it by Dint of Valour and Heroick Conduct from a dejected state by degrees, till he mounts to the highest pinnacle of Honour, in rescuing the distressed, destroying Monsters and Tyrants, gaining Kingdoms, and converting Infidels to the Christian Faith, obligeing by his Affability and excellent parts Queens and Princesses, to lay their Diadems and Grandure at his feet, and doing such things as have amazed Mankind. Therefore, for the honour of our Country, of which he has so well

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

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deserved, let his Memory live in the thoughts of every true English Man, and be to them a pattern of Heroick Virtue, that by imitating him, they may raise the very name of the British Empire, as formerly it was, to be the Terror of the World, which is the wish,

“ Reader,

“ Of your most

“ HUMBLE SERVANT.”

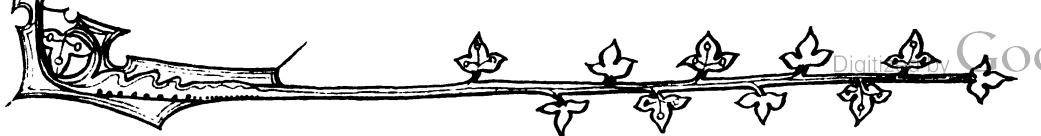
EDINBURGH, 67, GREAT KING STREET,
January 1838.

for benes of hamtoun

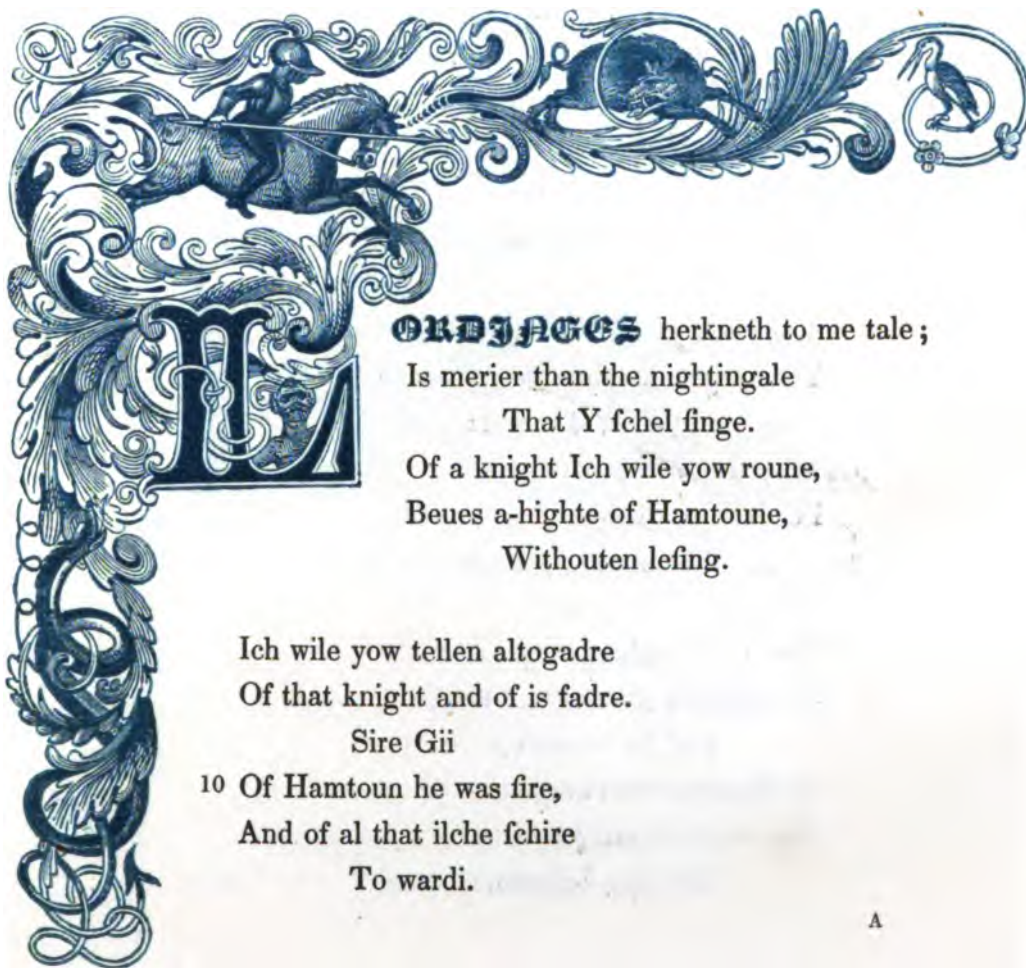


ordunge her knep to me tale
 if merier þa þe natingale
 þat y thei singe
 of knyght whiche toke roome
 benes shute of hamtoun
 knyghten lesing

1 ch whiche toke telle al to gode
 o f þat knyt and of us fadre
 s ire su
 o f hamtoun he was fre
 a nd of al þat ilke shire
 t o ward
 l ordunge þat of nham y tene
 n euer man of flesch ne fene
 n al to wrong
 a nd to he was in eth riue
 a nd ener he leueþ þat oute wau
 a l to late and long
 k han he was lene i to eke
 p at he ne misseþ þat self mek
 h e moute auaþ take
 s one þat after us baderþok
 h an bader be leuerþa alþat lode
 h add he hire for sake
 A uelke alke he tok an hound
 p e kinges doun of Rodond
 s o lare and bryt
 a llat þat he hire ener ther
 f or hire lone þat luf aler
 k ip meþel wurst
 p if maud whane of y told
 f aue maud þe llat t bold
 a nd fre y boren
 o f almagne þat emperur
 h ire bader loneþ paramur
 k ei þat be furen
 o ste to hire fader a sente
 a nd he þat lene þeþer thete
 f or hire sake
 o fte aueþek hire to name
 p e king for noping alme
 n oke hire þat take
 s the llat þat to fire an
 a hamtoun erl and bader



SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.



ORDYNGES herkneth to me tale;
Is merier than the nightingale
That Y schel finge.
Of a knight Ich wile yow rounne,
Beues a-highte of Hamtounne,
Withouten lefing.

Ich wile yow tellen altogadre
Of that knight and of is fadre.
Sire Gii
10 Of Hamtoun he was fire,
And of al that ilche schire
To wardi.

A

2 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Lordinges, this of whan Y telle,
Neuer man of fiesch ne felle
 Nas so strong,
And so he was in ech striue,
And euer he leuede withouten wiue
 Al to late and long.

Whan he was fallen into elde,
20 That he ne mighte him felf welde
 He wolde a wif take ;
Sone thar after Ich vnderfonde
Him had be leuer than al this londe
 Hadde he hire for sake.

An elde a wif he tok an honde,
The kinges doughter of Scotlonde
 So faire and bright ;
Allas that he hire euer ches !
For hire loue his lif a-les
30 With mechel vnright.

This maide Ichaue of y-told,
Faire maide she was and bold,
 And fre y-boren ;
Of Almayne that emperur
Hire hadde loued paramur
 Wel thar beforen.

Ofte to hire fader a-fente,
And he him felue theder wente
For hire fake ;
40 Ofte a-pruede hire to wiue,
The king for no thing aliue
Nolde hire him take.

Sithe a-gaf hire to fire Gii,
A stalword erl and hardi
Of South Hamtoun.
Man whan he falleth into elde
Feble a-wexeth and vnbelde
Thourgh right refoun.

So longe thai yede togedres te bedde,
50 A kneue child betwene hem thai hede,
Beues a-het.
Faire child he was and bolde,
He nas boutē feuē winter olde
Whan his fader was ded.

The leuedi hire misbethoughte,
And meche agen the right she wroughte
In hire tour ;
Me lord is olde and may nought werche,
Al dai him is leuer at cherche
60 Than in me bour.

4 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Hadde Ich i-taken a yong knight,
That ner nought brused in werre and fight
 Al fo he is,
Awolde me louen dai and night,
Cleppen and kiffen with al his might,
 And make me blis.

I nel hit lete for no thinge
That Ich nel him to dethe bringe
 With sum braide :
70 Anon right that leuedi fer
 To consaile clepede hir mafager,
 And to him faide :

Mafeger, do me furte,
That thow nelt nought discrure me
 To no wight,
And yif thow wilt that it fo be
I fchel the yeue gold and fe,
 And make the knight.

Thanne anwerde the mafager,—
80. Falso a-was that pautener
 And wel prut,—
Dame, bonte, Ich do the nede,
Ich graunte thow me forbede
 The londe thourgh out.

The leuedi thanne was wel fain,
Go, the feide, in to Almaine
 Out of me bour ;
Masfeger, be yep and fnel,
And on min helf thow grete wel
90 That emperur ;

And bid in the ferthe dai
That cometh in the moneth of May,
 For loue of me
That he be to fighte preft,
With his ferde in Hare forest
 Beside the fe.

Me lord Ich wile theder fende,
For his loue for to fchende
 And for to fle ;
100 Bid him that hit be nought beleued
That he ne fmite of his heued
 And fende hit me.

And whan he haueth fo y-do,
Me loue he fchel vnder fo
 Withouten delai.
Thanne feide that mafager,
Madame, Ich wile fone be ther,
 Now haue gode dai.

6 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Now that mafager him goth,
110 That ilche lord him worthe wroth
That him wroughte.
To schip that mafager him wode :
Allas ! the wind was al to gode
That him ouer broughte.

Tho he com in to Almayne,
Thar a-mette with a fwain
And grette him wel.
Felawe, a-feide, paramur,
Whar mai Ich finde themperur
120 Thow me tel ?

Ich wile the telle anon right,
At Rifoun a-lai to night
Be me fwere ;
The mafager him thankende anon,
And theder warder he gan gon
Withouten demere.

Themperur thar a-fonde ;
Adoun akneulede on the grounde
Afe hit was right,
130 And feide, the leuedi of South Hamton
The grette wel be Godes fone
That is fo bright :

And bad the, in the ferthe day
That cometh in the moneth o May,
How fo hit be
That ye be to fighte preft
With your ferde in Hare forest
Beside the fe.

Hire lord the wile theder fende,
140 For the loue for to schende
With lite meini,
Thar aboute thow schoft be soufe,
And thow schelt after wedde to spoufe
To thin amy.

Sai a-feide, Icham at hire hefte ;
Gif me lif hit wile lefte
Hit schel be do.
Glad Icham for that sawe
Than the fouel what ginneth dawe,
150 And sai hire fo.

And for thow woldes hire erande bede,
An hors i-charged with golde rede
Ich schel the yeue,
And withinne this fourtene night
Me self schel dobbe the to knight,
Gif that Ich liue.

8 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

The mesager him thanked yerne,
Hom agen he gan him terne
To Hamtoun :

160 The leuedi a-fond in hire bour,
And he hire clepede doceamur
And gan to roun.

Dame, a-feide, I the tel
That emperur the grette wel
With loue mest :
Glad he is for that tiding,
A-wile be prest at that fighting
In that forest.

Yif thow ert glad the lord to fle,
170 Gladder a-is for loue of the
Fele fithe.

The mesager hath thus i-faid ;
The leuedi right wel a-paid,
And maked hire blithe.

In Mai, in the formeste dai,
The leuedi in hire bedde lai
Ase hit wer nede ;
Hire lord she clepede out of halle,
And feide that euel was on hire falle,
180 She wende be ded.

That erl for hire hath forwe i-kaught,
 And askede yif she desired aught
 That mighte hire freure.
 Ye, she feide, of a wilde bor
 I wene me mineth boutte for,
 Al of the feure.

Madame, a-feide, for loue myn
 Whar mai Ich finde that wilde fwin?
 I wolde thow it hadde.
 190 And she anwerde with trefoun meft,
 Be the fe in Hare forest
 Thar abradde.

That erl fwor, be Godes grace,
 In that forest she* wolde chace
 That bor to take;
 And she anwerde with trefoun than,
 Bleffed be thow of alle man
 For mine fake!

That erl is hors began to ftride,
 200 His scheld he heng vpon is fide,
 Gert with fwerd
 Moſte non armur on him come,
 Him ſelf was boutte the ferthe ſome
 Toward that ferd.

* Sic MS.

10 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Allas! that he nadde be war
Of is fomen that weren thar
 Him for to schende.

With trefoun worth he thar i-flawe,
And i-brought of is lif dawē
210 Er he hom wende.

Whan he com in to the forest,
Themperur a-fond al preft.
 For enui
A-prikede out before is oft,
For pride and for make boft
 And gan to crie,

A-yilt the treitour! thow olde dote,
Thow schelt ben hanged be the throte.
 Thin heued thow schelt lefe:
220 The fone schel an honged be,
And the wif that is fo fre
 To me lemman i-chefe!

Therl anwerde at that fawe,
Me thenketh thow seift agen the lawe,
 So God me amende!
Me wif and child that was fo fre,
Yif thow thenkest beneme hem me,
 Ich schel hem defende.

Tho prwede is ftede fire Gii,
 230 A stalword man and hardi
 While he was founde.
 Themperur he smote with is spere,
 Out of is fadel he gan him bere
 And threw him to grounde.

Traitour, a-feide, thow ert to bolde !
 Wenestow thegh Ich bo olde
 To ben a-fered ?
 That thow hauest no right to me wif
 I schel the kithe be me lif,
 240 And drough is fwerd.

That erl held is fwerd a-drawe,
 Themperur with he hadde slawe
 Nadde be fokour.
 Thar come knightes mani and fale,
 Wel ten thofent tol be tale,
 To themperur.

Tho fire Gii him gan defende,
 Thre hondred heuedes of a-flende
 With is brond ;
 250 Hadde he ben armed wel, N wis,
 Al the meifter hadde ben his
 Ich vnderfonde.

12 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Thre men were flawe that he thar hadde,
That he with him out ladde
 And moſte nede ;
To haue merci that was is hope,
Themperur after him is lope
 Vpon a ſtede.

Therl knewlede to themperur,
260 Merci a-bad him and fokour
 And is lif :
Merci, fire, aſe thow ert fre,
Al that Ichaue I graunte the
 Boute me wif.

For thine men that Ichaue flawe
Haue her me ſwerd i-drawe
 And al me fe :
Boute me yonge ſone Bef,
And me wif that is me lef,
270 That let thow me.

For Gode, queth he, that Ich do nelle,
Themperur to him gan telle
 And was agreued,
Anon right is ſwerd out drough,
And the gode knight a-flough
 And nam is heued.

A knight a-tok the heued an honde,
 Haue, a-feide, her this fonde
 Me leue fwet ;
 280 The knight to Hamtoun tho gan gon,
 The leuedi thar a-fond anon
 And gan hire grete.

Dame, a-feide, to me atende :
 Themperur me hider fende
 With is pray ;
 And she feide, blessed mot he be !
 To wif a-schel wedde me
 Tomorwe in the dai.

Sai him me, fwete wight,
 290 That he come yet to-night
 In to me bour.
 The mesager is wei hath holde,
 Al a-feide afe she him tolde
 To themperur.

Now schalle we of him mone,
 Of Beueth that was Guis fone
 How wo him was.
 Yerne a-wep is hondes wrong,
 For his fader a-feide among
 300 Allas ! Allas !

14 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

He clepede his moder and feide is fawe,
 Vile houre the worst to drawe
 And al to twight ;
 Me thenketh Ich were thatof-ful fawe,
 For thow haueft me' fader flawe
 With mechel vnright.

Allas moder ! the faire ble
 Eucl becometh the houre to be,
 To holde bordel.
 310 And alle wif houren for the sake,
 The deuel of helle Ich hii betake
 Fleſch and fel !

Ac othing, moder, Iſchel the fwere,
 Yif Ich euer armes bere
 And ben of elke,
 Al that hath me fader i-flawe,
 And i-brought of is lif dawe,
 Ich ſchel hem yilde.

The moder hire hath vnderſtonde ;
 320 That child ſhe ſmot with hire honde
 Vnder is ere ;
 The child fel down and that ſcathe
 His meiſter toke him wel rathe
 That highte Saber.

The knight was trewe and of kinde,
 Strenger man ne scholde men finde
 To ride ne go.

A-was i-brought in tene and wrake
 Ofte for that childes sake

330 Afe wel afe tho.

That childe he nam vp be the arm,
 Wel wo him was for that harm
 That he thar hadde.
 Toward is kourt he him kende;
 The leuedi after Saber fende
 And to him radde.

Saber, she feide, thou ert me lef,
 Let fle me yonge sone Bef
 That is so bold;
 340 Let him an hange fwithe highe,
 I ne reche what deth he dighe
 Siththe he be cold.

Saber stod stille and was ful wo,
 Natheles a-feide a-wolde do
 After hire fawe;
 The childe withe him hom he nam,
 A fwin he tok whan he hom cam
 And dede hit of dawe.

16 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

The childes clothes that were gode,
350 Al a-bisprengde with that blode
 In mani ftede,
Afe gif the child wer to hewe,
A-thoughte to his moder hem schewe
 And fo a-dede.

At the laste him gan a-drede,
He let clothen in pouer wede
 That hende wight :
And feide, sone, thow most kepe
Vpon the felde mine schepe
360 This fourte night.

And whan the feste is come to thende,
Into another londe I schel the fende
 Fer be fouthe,
To a riche erl that schell the gie,
And teche the of corteisie
 In the youthe.

And whan thow ert of fwich elde
That thow might the felfe wilde,
 And ert of age,
370 Thanne scheltow come in to Ingelonde,
With werre winne in to thine honde
 Thin eritage.

I schel the helpe with alle me might,
 With dent of fwerd to gete the right,
 Be thow of elde :
 The child him thanked and fore wep,
 And forth a-went with the scchep
 Vpon the velde.

Beues was herde vpon the doun,
 380 He lokede homward to the toun
 That scholde ben his ;
 He beheld toward the tour,
 Trompes he herde and tabour
 And meche blis.

Lord, a-feide, on me thow mone !
 Ne was Ich ones an erles sone
 And now am herde,
 Mighte Ich with that emperur speke,
 Wel Ich wolde me fader awreke
 390 For al is ferde.

He nemeth is bat and forth a-goth,
 Swithe fori and wel wroth,
 Toward the tour ;
 Porter, a-fede, let me in reke,
 A lite thing Ichaue to speke
 With themperur.

o

18 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Go hom truant, the porter fede,
 Scherewe houre sone Y the rede
 Fro the gate,
 400 Boute thow go hennes al so fwithe
 His schell the rewe fele fithe
 Thow come ther ate.

Sixte the fcherewe ho be itte
 A-loketh a-wolde fmitte
 With is bat;
 Speke he ought meche more
 I schel him fmitte fwithe fore
 Vpon is hat.

For Gode, queth Beues, natheles
 410 An houre sone for soth Ich was,
 Wel Ich it wot
 Y nam no truant be Godes grace;
 With that a-lefte vp is mace
 Anon fot hot.

Beues withoute the gate stod,
 And smot the porter on the hod,
 That he gan falle;
 His heued he gan al to cleue,
 And forth a-wente with that leue
 420 Into the halle.

Al aboute he gan beholde,
 To themperur he spak wordes bolde
 With meche grame.
 Sire, a-fede, what doftow here?
 Whi colles thow aboute the fwire
 That ilche dame?

Me moder is that thow haueft an honde,
 What doftow her vpon me londe
 Withouten leue?
 430 Tak me me moder and mi fe
 Boute thow the rather hennes to
 I fchel the greue.

Naftow fire me fader flawe,
 Thow fchelt ben hanged and to drawe
 Be Godes wille.
 Aris fle hennes I the rede.
 Themperur to him fede,
 Foul be ftille.

Beues was nigh wod for grame,
 440 For a-clepede him foul be name,
 And to him a-wond;
 For al that weren in the place,
 Thries a-smot him with is mace
 And with is honde.

20 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Thries a-smot him on the kroun,
That emperur fel fwowe adoun
 Thar a-fat.

The leuedi is moder gan to grede,
Nemeth that treitour the fede

450 Anon with that.

Tho dorste Beues no leng abide,
The knightes vp in ech a-fide,
 More and laffe;
Wo him was for the childes fake,
Boute non of hem nolde him take,
 Hii lete him pafe,

Beues goth faste afe he mai,
His meister a-mette in the wai,
 That highte Saber;
460 And he him askede with blithe mod,
Beues, a-feide, for the rode
 What doftow her?

I schel the telle altogadre,
Beten Ichaue me stifadre
 With me mace;
Thries I smot in the heued,
Al for ded Ich him leued
 In the place,

Beues, queth Saber, thow ert to blame;
 470 The leuedi wile now do me schame
 For thine fake.
 Boute thow be me confaile do
 Thow might now sone bringe vs bo
 In meche wrake.

Saber Beues to his hous ladde,
 Meche of that leuedi him dradde.
 The leuedi out of the tour cam,
 To Saber the wei she nam.
 Saber, she feide, whar is Bef
 480 That wike treitour, that fule thef?
 Dame, a-feide, Ich dede him of dawe;
 Be the red and be the sawe
 This beth his clothe thow her fixt.
 The leuedi feide, Saber thow lixt,
 Boute thow me to him take
 Thow schelt abegge for is fake.

Beue[s] herde his meifter threte;
 To hire a-spak with hertte grete,
 And feide, lo me her bename,
 490 Do me meifter for me no schame,
 Yif thow me fext to whar Ich here.
 His moder tok him be the ere,
 Fain she wolde a-were of liue,
 Foure knightes she clepede bliue,

Wendeth she seide to the stonde,
 Yif ye feth schipes of Painim londe
 Selleth to hem this ilche hyne,
 That ye for no gode ne fine,
 Whather ye haue for him mor and lesse
 500 Selleth him right into hetheneffe.
 For the knightes gonne te
 Til that hii come to the fe,
 Schipes hii fonde ther stonde
 Of hetheneffe and of fele londe;
 The child hii chepeden to sale,
 Marchaundes thai fonde ferli sale,
 And folde that child for mechel aughte,
 And to the farafins him betaughte.
 Forth thai wente with that child,
 510 Crist of heuene be vs mild!
 The childes hertte was wel colde
 For that he was so fer i-folde,
 Natheles though him thoughte eile
 Toward Painim a-moste faile.
 When hii riuede out of that stond,
 The king highte Ermin of that londe,
 His wif was ded, that highte Morage,
 A doughter a-hadde of yong age,
 Jofiane that maide het,
 520 Hire schon were gold vpon hire fet,
 So faire she was and bright of mod
 Afe snow vpon the rede blod,

Whar to scholde that may discrue,
 Men wiste no fairer thing aliue,
 So hende ne wel i-taught,
 Boute of Cristene lawe she kowthe naught.
 The marchauns wente an highing
 And presente Beues to Ermyn king.
 The king thar of was glad and blithe,
 530 And thankede hem mani a fith.
 Mahoun, a-feide, the might be proute
 And this child wolde to the aboute,
 Yif a-wolde a farafin be,
 Yit Ich wolde hope a-scholde the ;
 Be Mahoun that fit an high
 Afairer child neuer I ne figh !
 Neither alingthe ne on brade,
 Ne non so fairie limes hade.
 Child, a-feide, whar wer the bore ?
 540 What is the name ? telle me fore,
 Yif Ich it wiste hit were me lef.
 For Gode, a-feide, Ich hatte Bef,
 I-boren Ich was in Ingelonde,
 At Hamtoun, be the se stronde ;
 Me fader was erl thar awhile,
 Me moder him let fle with gile,
 And me she folde into hethen londe ;
 Wikked beth fele wimmen to fonde.

Ac, fire, yif it euer fo betide
 550 That Ich mowe an horfe ride,
 And armes bere and fcheft to breke,
 Me fader deth Ich fchel wel wreke.

The kinges hertte wex wel cold
 When Beues hadde thus i-tolde,
 And faide, Inaue non eir after me dai,
 Boute Jofian this faire mai;
 And thow wile the God forfake,
 And to Apolyn me lord take,
 Hire I fchel the yeue to wiue,
 560 And al me lond after me liue.
 For Gode! queth Beues, that Inolde
 For al the feluer ne al the golde
 That is vnder heuene light,
 Ne for the doughter that is fo bright,
 Inolde forfake in none manere
 Ihesu that boughte me fo dere,
 Al mote thai be domnand deue
 That on the falfe Godes beleue!
 The king him louede wel the more
 570 For him ne ftod of no man fore,
 And feide, Beues, while thow ert fwain
 Thow fchelt be me chaumberlain,
 And thow fchelt, whan thow ert dobbed knight,
 Me baner bere in to eueright fight.

Beues anwerde al with skil,
 What ye me hoten don Ich wil.
 Beues was ther yer and other,
 The king him louede also is brother,
 And the maide that was so fligh,
 580 So dede eueri man that him figh.
 Be that he was fiftene yer olde,
 Knight ne fwain thar nas so bolde
 That him dorste agenes ride
 Ne with wrethe him abide.

His ferste bataile, for soth te fay,
 A-dede a Cristes messe day,
 Afe Beues scholde to water ride,
 And fiftene farafins be is fide,
 And Beues rod on Arondel
 590 That was a stede gode and lel,
 A farafin began to fay
 And askede him what het that day?
 Beues seide, for soth Y wis
 I no neuer what dai it is,
 For Inas boutte feue winter old
 Fro Cristendome Ich was i-fold,
 Tharfore Ine can telle noughte the
 What dai that hit mighte be.
 The farafin beheld and lough;
 600 This dai, a-feide, I knowe wel inough :

D

This is the ferste dai of Youl,
 The God was boren withouten doul,
 For thi men maker ther mor blisse
 Than men do her in hetheneffe,
 Anoure the god, so I schel myn,
 Bothe Mahoun and Apolyn.
 Beues to that farafin said,
 Of Cristendom yit Ichaue a-braid,
 Ichaue feie on this dai right

610 Armed mani a gentil knight,
 Torneande right in the feld
 With helmes bright and mani scheld,
 And were Ich alfe stith in plas,
 Afe euer Gii me fader was,
 Ich wolde for me Lordes loue,
 That sit high in heuene aboue,
 Fighte with yow euerichon
 Er than Ich wolde hennes gon.
 The farafines feide to his felawes,
 620 Lo ! brethern hire ye nought this sawes,
 How the yonge Cristene hounde
 A-faith a-wolde vs fellen to grounde,
 Wile we aboute him gon
 And fonde that treitour flon ?
 Al aboute thai gonne thringe,
 And hard on him thai gonne dinge,

And gaf him wondes mani on
 Thourgh the fleſch in to the bon,
 Depe wondes and fore
 630 That he mighte ſofre na more ;
 Tho his bodi began to ſmarte
 He gan plokken vp is hertte,
 Aſe tid to ſaraſin a wond,
 And breide a ſwerd out of is honde,
 And fifti ſaraſins in that ſtonde
 Thar with a-gaf hem dedli wonde,
 And ſum he ſtok of the ſwire
 That the heued flegh in to the riue re,
 And ſum he clef euene aſonder,
 640 Here hors is fet thai laine vnder,
 Ne was ther non that mighte aſcape.
 So Beues flough hem in a rape,
 The ſtedes hom to ſtable ran
 Withoute kenning of eni man.

Beues hom began to ride ;
 His wondes blēdde be ech ſide ;
 The ſtede he graithed vp anon,
 Into his chaumber he gan gon,
 And leide him deueling on the grounde
 650 To kolen is hertte in that ſtounde.
 Tiding com to king Ermyn
 That Beues hadde mad is men tyn ;

The king swor and feide is sawe
 For thi a-scholde ben to drawe.
 Vp stod that maide Jofian,
 And to hire fader she feide than,
 Sire, Ich wot wel in me thought
 That thine men ne slough he nought,
 Be Mahoun ne be Teruagaunt,
 660 Boute hit were him self defendaunt !
 Ac fader, she feide, be me red,
 Er thou do Beues to ded,
 Ich praie, sire, for loue o me
 Do bringe that child before the,
 Whan the child that is so bold
 His owene tale hath i-tolde,
 And thou wite the soth aflight,
 Who hath the wrong who hath right,
 Gef him his dom that he schel haue,
 670 Whather thou wilt him slen or saue.
 King Ermyn feide, me doughter fre
 Ase thou hauest feid so it schel be.
 Jofiane tho anon rightes
 Clepede to hire twei knightes,
 To Beues now wende ye,
 And prai him that he come to me,
 Er me fader arise fro his des,
 Ful wel Ich schel maken is pes
 Forth the knightes gonne gon,
 680 To Beues chaumber thai come anon,

And praide, afe he was gentil man,
 Come speke with Jofian.
 Beues stoutliche in that ffounde
 Haf vp his heued fro the grounde,
 With ftepe eighen and rowe bren
 So lotheliche he gan on hem fen,
 The twei knightes thar thai ftoode,
 Thai were hii wer nigh wode.
 A-feide, yif ye ner mafegers
 690 Ich wolde yow fle, lofengers.
 I nele rife o fot fro the grounde
 For speke with an hethen hounde;
 She is an honde, alfo be ye,
 Out of me chaumber fwithe ye fle!
 The knightes wenten out in rape,
 Thai were fain fo to ascape.
 To Jofian thai wente astit
 And feide of him is gret despit,
 Sertes a-clepede the hethene hound
 700 Thries in a lite ffounde,
 We nolde for al Ermonie
 Eft fones fe him with our eie.
 Hardeliche fhe feide, cometh with me,
 And Ich wile your waraunt be;
 Forth thai wente al i-fame,
 To Beues chaumber that he came.

30 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Lemman, she feide, gent and fre,
 For Godes loue spek with me!
 She kefte him bothe moth and chin,
 710 And gaf him confort gode afin,
 So him folaste that mai
 That al is care wente awai;
 And feide, lemman thin ore,
 Icham i-wounded fwithe fore.
 Lemman, she feide, with gode intent
 Ichaue brought an oyniment
 For make the bothe hol and fere,
 Wende we to me fader dere.
 Forth thai wenten an highing
 720 Til Ermyn the riche king ;
 And Beues tolde vnto him than
 How that flour ended and gan,
 And schewed on him in that flounde
 Fourti grete grisli wounde.

Thanne feide king Ermin the hore,
 I nolde Beues that thow ded wore,
 For al the londes that Ichaue
 Ich praie doughter that thow him faue,
 And proue to hele ase thow can
 730 The wondes of that doughti man.
 In to chaumber she gan him take,
 And riche bathes she let him make,

That with inne a lite ftonde
 He was bothe hol and fonde.
 Thanne was he ase fresch to fight
 So was the faukoun to the flight.
 His other prowesse who wile lere
 Hende herkneth and ye mai here.

A wilde bor thar was aboute,
 740 Ech man of him hadde gret doute;
 Man and houndes that he tok
 With his toskes he al to schok.
 Thei him hontede knightes tene,
 Tharof ne yef he nought a bene.
 At is mouth fif toskes ftonden out,
 Euerich was fif enches about,
 His fides wer hard and strong,
 His broftles were gret and long,
 Him self was fel and kouthe fighte;
 750 No man fle him ne mighte.

Beues lay in his bedde anight,
 And thoughte a-wolde kethen is mighte
 Vpon that fwin him felff one,
 That no man scholde with him gone.
 Amorwe whan hit was da cler,
 Arifeth knight and squier;
 Beues let fadlen is ronfi
 That bor a-thoughte to honti,

A-gerte him with a gode brond,
 760 And tok a spere in is hond,
 A scheld a-heng vpon is fide,
 Toward the wode he gan ride.
 Jofian that maide him beheld,
 Al hire loue to him she feld ;
 To hire self she seide ther she stod,
 Ne kepte Y neuer more gode,
 Ne na more of al this worldes blisse
 Thanne Beues with loue o time te kisse;
 In gode time were boren
 770 That Beues hadde to lemman koren.

Tho Beues into the wode cam,
 His scheld aboute is nekke a-nam,
 And tide his hors to an hei thorn,
 And blew a blast with is horn ;
 Thre motes a-blew al arowe
 That the bor him scholde knowe.
 Tho he com to the bor is dan,
 A-fegh ther bones of dede man
 The bor hadde flawe in the wode,
 780 And eten here flesch and dronke her blode.
 Aris, queth Beues, corfede gast,
 And yem me bataile wel in haft ;
 Sone fo the bor him figh,
 Arerde is brofsteles wel an high,

And stared on Beues with eien howe,
Al fo a-wolde him hate a-fwolwe ;
And for the bor yenede fo wide,
A spere Beues let to him glide ;
On the scholder he smat the bor,
790 His spere barft to pifes thore,
The bor stod stille agen the dent,
His hyde was harde ase any flent.
Now al to borfte is Beues spere,
A-drough his fwerd him felf to were,
And faught agen the bor fo grim,
A-smot the bor and he to him.
Thus the bataile gan leste long
Til the time of euefong,
That Beues was fo weri of foughte,
800 That of is lif hen ne roughte ;
And tho the bor was also,
Awai fro Beues he gan go,
Wile Beues made is praier
To God and Mari is moder dere,
Whather scholde other flen :
With that com the bor agen
And bente is broftles vp faunfaile,
Agen Beues to yeue bataile :
Out at is mouth in aither fide
810 The foim full ferli gan out glide,

E

And Beues in that ilche venev,
Thourgh Godes grace and is vertv,
With is fwerd out aflinte
Twei tolkes at the ferste dent ;
A spanne of the groin befor
With is fwerd he hath of schoren.
Tho the bor so loude cride,
Out of the forest wide and fide,
To the castel thar that lai Ermin,
820 Men herde the noife of the fwin ;
And, alse he made that lotheli cri,
His fwerd Beues hafteli
In at the mouth gan threste tho,
And karf his hertte euene ato :
The fwerd abreide agen fot hot,
And the bor his heued of fmot,
And on a tronfoun of is fpere,
That heued a-ftikede for to bere.
Thanne a-fette horn to mouthe,
830 And blew the pris afe well kouthe,
So glad he was for is honting.
That heued a-thoughte Jofian bring,
And er he com to that maide fre
Him com ftrokes fo gret plente,
That fain he was to weren is head,
And faue him self fro the ded.

A stiward was with king Ermin,
That hadde ticht to fle that swin ;
To Beues a bar gret envie
840 For that he hadde the meistrie ;
He dede arme his knightes stoute,
Foure and twenti in a route,
And ten forsters also he tok ;
And wente to wode, feith the bok.
Tharof ne wiste Beues noght,
Helpe him God that alle thing wrought !
In is wei he rit pas for pas,
Herkneth now a ferli cas,
A-wende pasi in grith and pes,
850 The stiward cride, leith on and fles !

Beues feigh that hii to him ferde,
A-wolde drawe to is fwerde,
Thanne hadde he leued it thor
Thar he hadde flawe the bor.
He nadde nothing him self to were
Boute a tronfoun of a spere ;
Tho was Beues fore desmeid,
The heued fro the tronfoun abraid,
And with the bor is heued a-faught,
860 And wan a sward of miche maught,
That Morgelai was cleped aflight ;
Beter sward bar neuer knight.

Tho Beues hadde that fwerd an honde,
Among the hethene knightes a-wond,
And sum vpon the helme a-hitte
Into the fadel he hem flitte,
And sum knight Beues so of raughte
The heued of at the ferste draughte,
So harde he gan to lein aboute
870 Among the hethene knightes stoute,
That non ne pasede hom aflight ;
So thourgh the grace of God almight,
The kinges stiward a-hitte so,
That is bodi a-clef ato.
The dede kors a-pulte adoun,
And lep him self into the arfoun.
That strok him thoughte wel i-fet,
For he was horsed meche bet.
He thoughte make pes doun rightes
880 Of the forsters ase of the knightes.
To hem faste he gan ride,
Thai gonne schete be ech aside,
So mani armes to him thai fende,
Vnnethe a-mighte him self defende,
So that in a lite stounde
The ten forsters wer feld te grounde,
And hew hem alle to pices smale,
So hit is fonde in frensche tale.

Jofian lai in a caftel,
 890 And fegh that fconfit euerich del.
 O Mahoun ! fhe feide, oure drichte,
 What Beues is man of meche mighte !
 Al this world yif Ich it hedde
 Ich him yeue me to wedde :
 Boute he me loue Icham ded.
 Swete Mahoun, what is the red
 Loue longing me hath becought !
 Thar of wot Beues right nought.
 Thus that maide made hire mon,
 900 Thar fhe ftod in the tour alon,
 And Beues thar the folk beleued,
 And went hom with the heued :
 That heued of that wilde fwin
 He prefente to king Ermin.
 The king tharof was glad and blithe,
 And thankede him ful mani a fithe,
 Ac he ne wifte ther of no wight
 How is ftiward to dethe was dight.

Thre yer after that bataile
 910 That Beues the bor gan afaile,
 A king ther com into Ermonie,
 And thoughte winne with meiftrie
 Jofiane that maide bright,
 That loued Beues with al hire might.

38 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Brademond cride afe he wer wod
 To king Ermin thar a-ftod,
 King, a-feide, fwithe bliue,
 Yem me the doughter to wiue;
 Yef thow me werneft, withouten faile
 920 I fchel winne hire in plein bataile,
 On fele half I fchel the anvghe,
 And al the londe I fchel destrughe,
 And the fle fo mai betide,
 And lay hire anight be me fide,
 And after a wile the doughte yeue
 To a weine pain that is for driue.
 Ermin anwerde bliue an highe,
 Be Mahoun, fire, thow fchelt lighe !
 Adoun of his tour a-went,
 930 And after al his knightes a-fent,
 And Brademond him afailed hadde,
 And askede hem alle what hii radde.
 A word thanne fpak that maiden bright,
 Be Mahoun ! fire, wer Beues a knight
 A-wolde defende the wel enough ;
 Me felf i-fegh whar he flough
 Your owene ftiward him befet,
 Alone in the wode with him a-met,
 At wode he hadde his fwerd beleued
 940 Thar he fmot of the bores heued ;
 He nadde nothing him felf to were
 Boute a tronfoun of is fpere,

And your ftiward gret peple hadde,
 Four and twenti knightes a-ladde,
 Al y-armed to the teth,*
 And eueri hadde fwore is deth,
 And ten forfters of the foreft
 With him a-broughte afe preft,
 That thoughte him haue flawe thore,
 950 And take the heued of the bore,
 And yeue the ftiward the renoun.
 Tho Beues fegh that foule trefoun,
 A-leide on with the bor is heued,
 Til that hii were adoun i-weued,
 And of the ftiward a-wan that day
 His gode fwerd Morgelay.
 The ten forfters alfo a-flough,
 And hom a-pafede wel i-nough,
 That he of hem hadde no lothe.
 960 King Ermyn thanne fwor is othe
 That he fcholde be maked knight,
 His baner to bere in that fight.

He clepede Beues at that fake,
 And feide, knight Ich wile the make.
 Thow fchelt bere into bataile
 Me baner Brademond to afaile.

* In MS. *deth*.

40 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Beues anwerde with blithe mod,
 Blethelich, a-feide, be the rod!
 King Ermin tho anon righte
 970 Dobbede Beues vnto knighte,
 And gaf him a scheld gode and fur,
 With thre eglen of afur,
 The champe of gold ful wel i-dight
 With fif fables of seluer bright;
 Sithe a-gerte him with Morgelay.
 A gonfanoun wel stout and gay
 Jofian him broughte for to bere,
 Sent of the scheld Y yow fwere.
 Beues dede on is actoun,
 980 Hit was worth mani a toun ;
 An hauberk him broughte that mai,
 So feiden alle that hit i-fai,
 Hit was wel i-wroughte and faire,
 Non egge tol mighte it nought paire ;
 After that she gaf him a stede
 That fwithe gode was at nede ;
 For hit was swift and ernede wel,
 Me clepede hit Arondel.

Beues in the fadel lep,
 990 His oft him folwede al to hep,
 With baner bright and scheldes schene,
 Thretti thofent and fiftene.

The ferste scheld trome Beues nam
 Brademond agenes him cam;
 His baner bar the king Redefoun
 That leuede on fire Mahoun.
 Row he was also a schep
 Beues of him nam gode kep.
 He smot Arondel with spures of gold,
 1000 Thanne thoughte that hors that he scholde.
 Agen Redefoun Beues gan ride,
 And smot him thourgh out bothe fide,
 Hauberk ne scheld ne actioun
 Ne vailede him nought worth a botoun,
 That he ne fel ded to the grounde.
 Reste the, queth Beues, hethen hounde,
 The hadde beter atom than here!
 Lay on faste a-bad his fere.

Tho laide thai on with eger mod,
 1010 And flowe Sarfins as hii wer wod,
 And fire Beues the cristene knight
 Slough ase mani in that fight
 With Morgelay him self alone
 Ase thai deden euerichone.
 And euer hii wer preft to fight*
 Til that the sonne fet right.
 Beues and is oft withinne a ffounde,
 Sexti thofent thai felde to grounde,

* In MS. *to fight prest.*

42 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

That were out of Dameske i-fent,
 1020 That neuer on homeward ne went.
 Tho Brademond segh is folk i-flayn,
 A-flegh awei with mighte and mayn;
 Afe he com ride be a coft
 Twei knightes a-fond of Beues oft,
 Of his stede he gan doun lighte
 And bond hem bothe anon righte,
 And thoughte hem lede to his prifoun,
 And haue for hem gret raunfoun.
 Afe he trosede hem on is stede,
 1030 Beues of hem nam gode hede,
 And hasteliche in that tide
 After Brademond he gan ride,
 And seide, Brademond olde wreche,
 Ertow come Jofiane to feche?
 Erft thou schelt pase thourgh min hond,
 And thourgh Morgelay me gode brond.
 Withouten eni wordes mo,
 Beues Brademond hitte fo
 Vpon his helm in that stounde,
 1040 That a-felde him flat to grounde.

Merci, queth, Ich me yelde
 Recreaunt to the in this felde,
 So harde the smiteft vpon me kroun,
 Ich do me alle in the bandoun

Sexti cites with castel tour
 Thin owen Beues to thin onour,
 With that thow lete me ascape.
 Beues anwerde tho in rape,
 Nay, a-feide, be fein Martyn!
 1050 Icham i-fwore to king Ermin
 Al that Ich do it is dede,
 Thar fore fire, fo God me spede,
 Thow schelt fwere vpon the lay
 Thow schelt werre on him night ne dai,
 And omage eche yer him yelde,
 And al the londe of him helde.
 Brademond anwerde anon righte,
 Thar to me treuthe Y the plighte,
 That Ine schel neuer don him dere,
 1060 Ne agen the Beues armes bere.
 And whan he hadde fwore fo,
 Beues let king Brademond go.
 Allas! that he nadde him flawe,
 And i-brought of is lif dawe;
 For fiththe for al is faire beheste,
 Mani dai a-maked him feste,
 In is prifoun a-lai feue yere
 Afe ye may now forthward here.

Beues rod hom and gan to finge,
 1070 And feide to Ermin the kinge,

44 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Sire, Brademond king of Sarafine,
A-is become one of thine:
The man a-is to then hefte
While his lif wile leste,
Londes and ledes al that he walt,
A-faith fire of the hem halt.
Thame was king Ermin at that fithe
In his hertte fwith blithe;
A-clepede is doughter and faide,
1080 Jofian the faire maide,
Vnarme Beues he wer at mete,
And ferue the felf him ther ate.
Tho nolde that maide neuer blinne,
Til she com to hire inne,
Thar she lai hire felue anight;
Thar she fette that gentil knight,
Hire felf gaf him water to hond,
And fette before him al is fonde.
Tho Beues hadde wel i-ete,
1090 And on the maiden's bed i-fete,
That mai that was fo bright of hiwe
Thoughte she wolde hire confaile fchewe,
And feide, Beues lemman thin ore
Ichaue loued the ful yore,
Sikerli can I no rede,
Boute thow me loue Icham dede,
And bout thow with me do the wille.
For Gode, queth, that Ich do nelle;

- Her is a-feide min vnliche,
 1100 Brademond king that is fo riche,
 In al this world nis ther man,
 Prinse, ne king, ne foudan,
 That the to wiue haue nolde,
 And lie the hadde ones beholde.
 Merci, she feide, yet with than
 Ichauede the leuer to me lemman,
 The bodi in the scherte naked,
 Than al the gold that Crist hath maked,
 And thow wost with me do the wille.
 1110 For Gode, queth he, that I do nelle.
 She fel adoun and wep right fore,
 Thow feideft foth her before,
 In al this world nis ther man,
 Prinse ne king ne foudan,
 That me to wiue haue nolde,
 And he me hadde ones beholde,
 And thow cherl me hauest forsake.
 Mahoun the yeue tene and wrake!
 Beter become the i-liche
 1120 For to fowen an old dicke,
 Thanne for to be dobbed knight,
 Te gon among maidenen bright;
 To other contre thow might fare,
 Mahoun the yeue tene and care!
 Damefele, a-feide, thow feist vnright;
 Me fader was bothe erl and knight.

46 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

How mighte Ich thanne ben a cherl
Whan me fader was knight and erl?
To other contre Ich wile te,

1130 Scheltow me namore i-fe,
Thow yeue me an hors lo it her,
I nel namore of the daunger.
Forth him wente fire Beuoun
And tok is in that toun,
Sore aneighed and afchamed
For she hadde him so gramed.

Tho Beues was to toun i-go,
Tho began that maidenen wo,
Thanne was hire wo with alle,
1140 Hire thoughte the tour wolde on hir falle.
She clepede hire chaumberlein Bonefas,
And tolde to him al hire cas,
And bad him to Beues wende,
And fai him Ich wille amende
Altogedre of word and dede
Of that Ichaue him mifede.
Forth wente Bonefas in that ffounde,
And Beues in is chaumber a-founde,
And feide she him theder fende,
1150 And that she wolde alle amende
Altogedres to is wille,
Bothe loude and eke stille.

Thanne anſwerde Beues the fer,
 Sai thow might nought ſpeden her ;
 Ac for thow bringeſt fro hir meſage,
 I ſchel the yeue to the wage
 A mantel whit fo melk
 The broider is of tuli felk,
 Beten abouten with rede golde,
 1160 The king to were thegh a-ſcholde.
 Bonefas him thankede yerne,
 Hom agen he gan to terne.
 A-fond that maide in forwe and care,
 And tolde hire his anſware,
 That ne mighte nought ſpede
 Aboute hire nede.
 And feide thow haddeſt vnright
 So te miſin a noble knight.
 Who gaf the this ilche wede ?
 1170 Beues that hendi knight a-feide.
 Allas ! the feide, Ich was to blame,
 Whan Ich feide him ſwiche ſchame.
 For hit was neuer a cherles dede
 To yeue a maſeger ſwiche a wede.
 Whan he nel nought to me come
 The wei to his chaumber Y wil neme ;
 And what euer of me beſalle,
 Ich wile wende into is halle.

Beues herde, that maide ther oute ;
 1180 Afe yif aslep he gan to route.
 Awake lemman, she feide, awake,
 Icham i-come me pes to make.
 Lemman for the corteisie
 Spek with me a word or tweie.
 Damefele, queth Beues thanne,
 Let me ligge and go the wei henne ;
 Icham weri of foughte fore,
 Ich faught for the Inel na more.
 Merci, she feide, lemman thin ore.
 1190 She fel adoun and wep wel fore.
 Men, faith she, feide in olde riote,
 That wimmannes bolt is sone schote,
 Foryem me that Ichaue misfede,
 And Ich wile right now to mede,
 Min false godes al forfake,
 And cristendom for the loue take.
 In that maner, queth the knight,
 I graunte the me fwete wight,
 And kiste hire at that cordement ;
 1200 Thar fore he was negh after schent.

The twei knightes that he vnbond
 That were in Brademondes hond,
 He made that on is chaumberlain,
 Him hadde be beter he hadde hem slein.

Thei wente to the king and fwor othe,
 No wonder fire thegh ye be wrothe,
 No wonder thegh ye ben agreued,
 Whan Beues fcherewe misbeleued
 The doughter he hath now forlain,
 1210 Hit gode, fire, that he wer flain.
 Hii lowe the fcherewes that him gan wreie,
 In helle mote thai hongen beie!
 He dede nothing·boute ones hire kifte,
 Nought elles bi hem men ne wifte.
 Tharfore hit is soth i-faide,
 And in the rime right wel i-laid,
 Deliure a thef fro the galwe
 He the hateth after be alle halwe.

Allas! queth Ermin the king,
 1220 Wel fore me reweth that tiding.
 Seththe he com me ferft to
 So meche he hath for me ido,
 I ne mighte for al Peynim londe
 That men dede him eni fchonde,
 Ac fain Ich wolde awreke be,
 Boute Ine mighte hit nought i-fe.
 Thanne bespak a farafin,
 Haue he Cristes kurs and myn!
 Sire, ye fcholle for is fake,
 1230 A letter fwithe anon do make

G

50 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

To Brademond the stronge king,
 And do him theder the letter bringe,
 And in the letter the schelt saie
 That he hath Jofian forlaie.
 Whan the letter was come to thende
 Atfer Beues the king let fende,
 And seide, Beues thow most hanne
 To Brademond thin owene manne,
 Al in folas in deliit

1240 Thow most him bere this ilche scriit,
 Ac yif thow schelt me letter bere,
 Vpon the lai thow schelt me swere
 That thow ne schelt with no man mele
 To schewe the prente of me fele.
 I wile, queth Beues afe snel,
 The leter bere treuliche and wel.
 Haue Ich Arondel me stede,
 Ich wile fare into that thede,
 And Morgelai me gode bronde,
 1250 Ich wile wende into that londe.
 King Ermin seide in is fawe,
 That ner no mesager is lawe
 To ride vpon an heui stede,
 That swiftli scholde don is nede,
 Ac nim a lighter hakenai,
 And les her the swerd Morgelai,
 And thow schelt come to Brademonde
 Sone withinne a lite stounde.

Beues an hakenai bestrit
 1260 And in his wei forth a-rit,
 And bereth with him is owene deth;
 Boute God him helpe that alle thing feth.

Terne we agen thar we wer er,
 And speke we of is em Saber.
 After that Beues was thus fold,
 For him is hertte was euer cold;
 A-clepede to him his sone Terri,
 And bad him wenden and asprie
 Into euerie londe fer and ner,
 1270 Whider him ladde the maroner.
 And feide, sone, thow ert min owen,
 Wel thow canst the lord knowen.
 Ich hote the sone in alle manere
 That thow him feche this feue yer,
 Ich wile feche him mowe thow him fynde,
 Though he be biyende Ynde,
 Terri is sone is forth i-fare,
 Beues a-foughte eueri whare
 In al hetbenes nan toun non
 1280 That Cristene man mighte ther in gon,
 That he ne hath Beues in i-fought,
 Ae he ne kouthe finde him nought.
 So hit befel vpon a eas
 That Terri com beside Damas,

And afe he com forth be that ftede
 A-fat and dinede in a wede,
 Vnder a faire medle tre,
 That fire Beues gan of [see].
 Sire, queth Terri, for fein Juline,
 1290 Is it the wille com nere and dine.
 Beues was of hongred fore,
 And kouthe him gret thank therfore;
 For twei dawes he hadde ridde
 Fastande in that ilche wede.

The palmer nas nought withouten flore;
 Inough a-leide him before;
 Bred and flefc out of is male,
 And of his flaketes win and ale.
 Whan Beues hadde eten gret foifoun,
 1300 Terri askede at fire Beuoun,
 Yif a-herde telle yong or olde
 Of a child that theder was folde,
 His name was i-hote Beuoun,
 I-bore a-was at South Hamtoun.
 Beues beheld Terri and lough,
 And feide, a-knew that child wel inough,
 Hit is nought a-feide gon longe
 I fegh the Sarfins that child an honge.
 Terri fel ther down and fwough;
 1310 His her, his clothes, he alto drough;

Whan he awok and fpeke mighte,
 Sore a-wep and fore fighte,
 And feide, allas! that he was boren,
 Is me lord Beues forloren?
 Beues tok him vp at that cas,
 And gan him for to folas,
 Wend hom, a-feide, to the contre,
 Sai the frendes fo Ichaue the,
 Though thow him feche thes feue yer,
 1320 Thow worst that child neuer the ner.
 Terri on Beues beheld,
 And fegh the boifte with a scheld.
 Me thenketh thow ert a mafager
 That in this londe walkes her,
 Icham a clerk and to fcole yede
 Sire let me the letter rede,
 For thow might haue gret doute
 Thin owene deth to bere aboute.
 Beues feide, Ich vnderftonde
 1330 He that me tok this letter an honde,
 He ne wolde me non other
 Than Ich were is owene brother.
 Beues him thankede and thus hii delde :
 Terri wente hom and telde
 His fader Saber in the Ilde of Wight,
 How him tolde a gentil knight
 That Sarfins hadde Beues forfare,
 And hangede him while he was thare.

54 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Saber wep and made drem,
 1340 For he was the childes em,
 And ech yer on a dai certaine,
 Vpon themperur of Almaine,
 With a wel gret baronage
 Acleimede his eritage.

Let we now ben is em Saber,
 And speke of Beues the mafeger.
 Forth him wente fire Beuoun
 Til a-com to Dames toun,
 Aboute the time of middai,
 1350 Out of a mameri a-fai
 Sarafins com gret foifoun,
 That hadde anoured here Mahoun.
 Beues of is palfrei alighte,
 And ran to her mameri ful righte,
 And fleugh here prest that was ther in,
 And threw here godes in the fen,
 And lough hem alle ther to scorn.
 On ascapede and at orn
 In at the castel yete,
 1360 Afe the king fat at the mete.
 Sire, feide this man, at the frome
 Here is i-come a corfede gome,
 That throweth our godes in the fen,
 And fleth al oure men;
 Vnnethe iscapede among that thing
 For to bringe the tiding.

Brademond quakede at the bord,
 And feid, that is Beues my lord.
 Beues wente in at the castel gate,
 1370 His hors he lefte ther ate,
 And wente forth in to the halle,
 And gret hem in this maner alle.
 God, that made this world aronde,
 The faue fire king Brademond,
 And ek alle thine fere
 That I fe now here;
 And yif that ilche bleffing
 Liketh the right nothing,
 Mahoun that is God thin,
 1380 Teruagaunt and Apolin,
 The bleffi and dighte
 Be alle here mighte !
 Lo ! here, the king Ermin
 The fente this letter in parchemin,
 And ase the letter the telleth to
 A-bad thow scholdest fwithe do.
 Beues kneuled and nolde nought stonde,
 And gaf vp is deth with is owene honde.
 Brademonde quakede al for drede,
 1390 He vndede the letter and gan to rede,
 And fond i-writen in that felle
 How that he scholde Beues aquelle.
 Thanne feide Brademond to twenti king
 That were that dai at is giftning,

56 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

A-spak with trefoun and with gile,
 Arifeth vp, he feide awhile,
 Euerich of yow fro the bord
 And welcometh your kende lord.
 Alle hi gonnen vp right stonde,
 1400 And Brademond tok Beues be the honde,
 And held him faste at that fake
 That he ne scholde is fwerd out take,
 And cride alfe he hadde be wod
 To hem alle aboute him stod,
 Afe ye me louen at this stounde
 Bringeth this man fwith to grounde.
 So faste hii gonne aboute him scheue
 Afe don ben aboute the heue,
 So withinne a lite stounde
 1410 Beues was i-brought to grounde.
 Brademond feide him anon right,
 Yif thow me naddest wonne with fight,
 Inolde for nothing hit beleue
 That thow schoft ben hanged er eue,
 Ac afe euel the schel betide
 In me prifoun thow schelt abide,
 Vnder therthe twenti teife,
 Thar thow schelt haue meche mifeife.
 Ne scheltow haue til thow be ded
 1420 Boute ech a dai quarter of a lof bred;
 Yif thow wilt drinke, thegh it be nought fwet,
 The schelt hit take vnder the fet.

A-dede Beues binde to a fton gret,
That wegh feue quarters of whet,
And het him caste into prifoun
That twenti teife was dep adoun.
At the prifoun dore Beues fond
A tronfoun that he tok in his hond,
Thar with a-thoughte were him there
1430 Fram wormes that in prifoun were.
Now is Beues at this petes grounde,
God bringe him vp hol and fonde !

Now speke we of Jofian the maide,
That com to hire fader and faide,
Sire, she feide, whar Beues be
That me mighte him nought fern i-fe !
Doughter, a-feide, a-is i-fare
Into his londe, and woneth thare
In to is owene eritage,
1440 And hath a wif of gret parage,
The kinges doughter of Ingelonde,
Afe men doth me to vnderfonde.
Thanne was that maide wo ynough,
In hire chaumber hire her she drogh ;
And wep and feide euer mo
That fum trefoun thar was y-do.
That me ne telde ord and ende
What dai awhanne a-wolde wende.

H

Of Mombraunt the king Ynor,
 1450 A riche king of gret trefore,
 Whan he owhar to werre wolde,
 Fiftene kinges him fewe scholde,
 Comen a-is Jofian to wedde,
 Agen hire fader so a-fpedde
 That he hire grauntede to his wiue,
 And al is londe after is liue.
 Tho Jofian wiste she scholde be quen,
 Hit was nought be hire wille I wen ;
 Hire were leuer haue had lasse,
 1460 And haue be Beues is contaffe.
 Natheles, now it is so,
 Hire fader wil she moſte do.
 Ac euer she feide, Beuoun,
 Hende knyghte of Southe Hamtoun,
 Naddeſtow me neuer forfake
 Yif ſum trefoun hit nadde make :
 Ac for the loue that was ſo gode,
 That i-loued aſe min hertte blode,
 Ichauē, ſhe feide, a ring on
 1470 That of ſwiche vertu is the ſton,
 While Ichauē on that ilche ring
 To me ſchel no man haue welling ;
 And Beues, ſhe feide, be God aboue !
 I ſchel it weren for the loue.
 Whan hit to that time ſpedde
 That Ynor ſcholde that maide wedde,

He let fende withouten enfoine
After the foudan of Habiloine,
And after the fiftene kinge
1480 That him scholde omage bringe,
And bad hem com lest and meste,
To onoure that meri feste.

If that feste nel Ich na more telle,
For to highe with our spelle.
Whan al the feste to yede
Ech knight wente to is ftede,
Men graicede cartes ane somers,
Knightes to horse and squiers,
And Jofian with meche care
1490 Theder was brought in hire chare.
King Ermin nom Arondel
And let him fadlen faire and wel,
A-wente to Beues chaumber ther he lay,
And nom his fwerd Morgelay ;
With Arondel a-gan it lede
To king Ynor, and thus a-fede,
Sone, a-fede, haue this ftede,
The beste fole that man mai fede,
And this fwerd of stel broun
1500 That was Beues of Hamtoun.
A-nolde hit geue wer it in is honde
Nought for al Painim londe.

60 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Ne Ich, queth the King Ynor,
 For al the gold ne the trefor
 That thow might in the cite belouke.
 Sone, queth Ermin, wel mot the it brouke.
 Ynor gan homward te ride,
 And dede lede Arondel be is fide.
 Whan he com withoute Mombraunt,
 1510 A-fwor is oth be Teruagaunt,
 That he wolde into his cite ride
 Vpon Arondel before is bride.
 Arondel thar he bestrit;
 That hors wel fone vnder fit
 That Beues nas nought vpon is rigge,
 The king wel fore scholde hit abegge.
 He ran ouer dich and thorn,
 Thourgh wode and thourgh thekke korn;
 For no water ne for no londe
 1520 Nowhar nolde that ftede a-ftonde;
 At the lafte a-threw Ynor doun,
 And al to brak the kinges kroun,
 That al is kingdom wel vnnethe
 Arerede him ther fro the dethe;
 And er hii mighte that hors winne
 Thai laughte him with queinte ginne.
 A wonder thing now ye may here;
 After al that feue yere
 To rakenteis a-ftod i-teide,
 1530 Nas mete ne drinke before him leid,

SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN. - 61

Hey ne oten ne water clere,
Boute be a kord of asolere.
No man dorste com him hende,
Thar that hors stod in bende.

Now is Jofian a quene,
Beues in prifoun hath gret tene.
The romounce telleth ther a-fet
Til the her on is heued greu to is fet;
Snakes and euetes and oades fale,
1540 How mani can I nought telle in tale,
That in the prifoun were with him,
That prouede euer with her venim
To fle Beues that gentil knight,
Oc, thourgh the grace of God almight,
With the tronsoun that he to prifoun tok
A-flough hem alle, fo faith the bok.
A fleande nadder was in an hole,
For elde blak ase eni cole.
Vnto Beues she gan flinge,
1550 And in the forehed thoughte him ftinge;
Beues was redi with is tronsoun,
And smot hire that she fel adoun.
Vpon agen the nadder rowe,
And breide awei his right browe;
Tho was Beues fore agreued
And smot the nadder on the heued.

So harde dent he hire gaf
 The brein cleuede on is flat.
 Doun fel the nadder withouten faile,
 1560 And smot fo Beues with the taile,
 That negh a-les ther contenaunfe
 Almeft is lif was in balaunfe.
 Whan he awakede of that fwough,
 The tronfoun eft to him a-drough,
 And bet hire al to pifes smale,
 Afe hit is fonde in Frenfche tale.
 Tho he hadde flawe the foule fendes,
 Be that hadde Beues lein in bendes
 Seue yer in peines grete,
 1570 Lite i-dronke and laffe i-ete.
 His browe flank for defaut of yeme,
 That it fet after ase a-feme,
 Whar thourgh that maide ne kneu him nought
 Whan hii were eft togedre brought.

On a dai ase he was mad and feint,
 To Jhesu Crist he made is pleint;
 And to his moder, feinte Marie,
 Reuliche he gan to hem crie.
 Lord, a-feide, heuene king,
 1580 Schepere of erthe and alle thing,
 What haue Ich fo meche misgilt
 That thow fext and tholen wilt

That the wetherwines and the fo-
Schel the feruaunt do this wo?
Ich bedde the lord for the pite
That thow haue merci on me,
And geue grace hennes to gange,
Or sone be drawen other an hange.
Me roughte neuer what deth to me come,
1590 With that Ich were hennes nome.
The gailers that him scholde yeme,
Whan hii herde him thus reme,
Thef, cherl, feide, that on tho
Now beth the lif dawes y-do,
For king ne kaifer ne for no fore,
Ne scheltow leue no lenger more.
Anon rightes with that word
A laumpe he let down be a cord,
A fwerd a-tok be his fide,
1600 And be the cord he gan down glide,
And smot him with that other hond,
And Beues to the grounde a-wond.
Allas! queth Beues, that ilche flounde;
Wo is the man that liih y-bounde
Medel bothe fet and honde.
Tho Ich com ferft into this londe,
Hadde Ich had me fwerd Morgelay,
And Arondel me gode palfray,
For Dames nadde be trefoun
1610 Inolde haue geue a botoun,

And now the meste wreche of alle
 With a strok me adoun falle ;
 Bidde Ich neuer with Jhefu speke,
 Boute Ich therof ben awreke.
 A-smot the gailer with is fest,
 That is nekke him to berst.
 His felawe aboue gan to crie :
 Highe hider, felawe, queth Beues, highe!
 Yif thow most haue help, a-fede,
 1620 Ich come to the with a gode spede.
 Yif, queth Beues, al for gile,
 And knette the rop thar while,
 Afe high afe a-mighte reche.
 Tho queth Beues with reuful speche,
 For the loue of sein Mahoun
 Be the rop glid bliue adoun,
 And help that this thef wer ded.
 Whan he hadde thus i-fed,
 That other gailer no leng abod,
 1630 Boute be rop adoun he glod.
 Whan the rop failede in is hond,
 Beues held vp that gode bronde,
 And felde to gronde that fori wight,
 Thourgh out is bodi that fwerd he pight.

Now er thai ded the geilers tweie,
 And Beues lith to the raken teie :

His lif him thoughte al to long,
 Thre daies after he nett ne drong.
 Tofore that, for fothe to fai,
 1640 A-was woned ech other dai,
 Of bere lof to haue a quarter
 To his mete and to his diner ;
 And for his meisters wer bothe ded
 Thre daies after he ne et no bred.
 To Jhesu Crist he bed abone
 And he him grauntede wel fone ;
 So yerne he gan to Jhesu speke
 That his vetres gone breke,
 And of is medel the gret ston ;
 1650 Jhesu Crist he thankede anon.
 A-wente quik out of prisoun
 Be the rop the gailer com adoun,
 And wente into the castel right,
 Ac it was aboute the midnight ;
 He lokede aboute fer and ner,
 No man wakande ne fegh he ther.
 He beheld forther a lite
 To a chaumber vnder a garite,
 Thar inne he fegh torges i-light,
 1660 Beues wente theder ful right ;
 Twelf knightes a-fond ther aslepe,
 That hadde the castel for to kepe.
 The chaumber dore a-fond vnsteke,
 And priueliche he gan in reke,

66 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

And armede him in yrene wede,
 The beste that he fond at nede ;
 And gerte him with a gode bronde,
 And tok a gode spere in is honde.
 A scheld aboute is nekke he cast,
 1670 And wente out of the chaumber on haft.
 Forther a-herde in a stable
 Pages fele withoute fable,
 Ase thai fete in here ragin
 In at the dore Beues gan spring,
 An for thai scholde him nought wrai,
 Vnder his hond he made him plai.
 And whan the sarafins were i-flawe,
 The beste stede he let forth drawe,
 And fadelede hit and wel a-dight,
 1680 And wente him forth anon right,
 And gan to crie with loude steuen,
 And the porter he gan neuenen.
 Awake, a-feide, proude felawe,
 Thow were worthi ben hanged and drawe !
 Highe the gates wer vnsteke,
 Beues is out of prifoun reke,
 And Icham sent now for is fake,
 The treitour yif Ich mighte of take.
 The porter was al bewaped :
 1690 Alas ! queth he, is Beues ascaped ?
 Vp he caste the gates wide,
 And Beues bi him gan out ride,

And tok is wei ful haftelie
 Toward the londe of Ermonie.
 He nadde ride in is wei
 Boute feue mile of that contrei,
 He wex asleped wonder fore,
 He mighte ride no forther more ;
 He reinede his hors to a chefteine,
 1700 And felle aslepe vpon the pleine.
 And alfe a-flep in is fweuene,
 Him thoughte Brademond and kinges feuen,
 Stod ouer him with fwerdes drawe,
 Al flepande him wolde han flawe.
 Of that fweuen he was of drad;
 He lep to hors afe he wer mad,
 Toward Damas agein aplight.
 Now reſte we her a lite wight,
 And ſpeke we ſchalle of Brademond;
 1710 Amorwe whan he it hadde i-fonde
 That Beues was aſcaped fo,
 In is hertte him was ful wo.
 That time be comin acent,
 Thar was comin parlement,
 Erles, kinges, laſſe and more,
 And fiftene kinges wer ſanned thore.
 To hem Brademond tolde thare
 That Beues was fro him i-fare,
 And bad help with might and main
 1720 For to ſeche Beues again.

A king ther was fwithe fer,
 His nam was hote Grander.
 An hors he hadde of gret pris,
 That was i-cleped Trinchefis;
 For him a-gaf feluer wight
 Er he that hors haue might.
 He armede him in yrene wede,
 Seue knightes he gan with him lede,
 And prikede forth on Trenchefis
 1730 And wende wenne meche pris,
 And Beues fone he gan fe
 Afe he rod toward the cite.
 A-yilt the, a-feide, thow fox welp,
 The God schel the nothing help,
 For her thourgh min hondes one
 For sothe thow schelt the lif forgon!
 So me helpe God! queth Beues, tho,
 Hit were no meiftri me to flo,
 For this is the ferthe dai agon
 1740 Mete ne drinke ne bot I non,
 Ac natheles God it wot
 Yif Ich alle nedes mot,
 Yit Ich wile afaie
 A lite box the to paie.

King Grander was of herte grim,
 And rod to Beues and he to him:

And afe thei bothe togedre mete,
 With here launces thei gonne mete,
 That hit gonnen al to driue
 1750 And te borften on pifes fue.
 Here fwerdes drowe knightes stoute,
 And fighteth fafte it is no doute,
 The medwe squaughte of her dentes,
 The fur fleggh out fo spark a-flintes;
 Thus thai leide on in bothe fide
 Betwene midmorwe and vndetide.
 King Grander was agremed strong
 That fire Beues him stod fo long,
 And with his fwerd a-hitte i-scheld,
 1760 A quarter fel into the feld.
 Hauberk, plate, and aktoun,
 Into Beues forther arfoun,
 Half a fot he karf down right.
 Tho Beues feggh that strok of might,
 A-feide, that dent was wel i-fet,
 Fasten Y wile another bet.
 With that word Beues smot down
 Grander is scheld with is fachoun,
 And is left hande be the wrefte
 1770 Hit fleggh awei thourgh help of Crist.
 Tho Grander hadde his scheld i-lore,
 He faught afe he wer wode ther fore;
 A-gaf Beues strokes that tide,
 Non ne moſte other abide.

Beues therof was agreued,
 And smot of king Grander is heued,
 The dede kors in that throwe
 Fel out ouer the fadel bowe.
 Tho king Grander was i-flawe.
 1780 The feue knightes of hethen lawe
 Beues slough that ilche stounde;
 So hit is in Frensch y-founde.
 For nought Beues nolde belaue
 The beter hors a-wolde haue;
 Beues *Strencheſis beſtrit,
 And in is weie forth a-rit;
 And Brademond with al is oft †
 Com after with meche boſt;
 So longe hii han Beues driue,
 1790 That hii come to the cliue,
 Thar the wilde fe was.
 Herkneth now a wonder cas !
 Into the fe a-moſte I wis
 Other fighte agenes al hethenes.

To Jheſu Criſt he bad abone,
 And he him grauntede wel ſone.
 Lord! a-fede, heuene king,
 Schepere of erthe and alle thing,
 Thow madeſt fiſch aſe alſe man,
 1800 That nothing of fenne ne cau,

* Sic in MS.

† In MS. *boſt*.

Ne nought of fisches kenne,
 Neuer yet ne dede fenne
 Of this hethene hounde
 That beste the and bounde,
 And bete the body to the dethe;
 Thar fore Ich may alfe ethe
 To water fle in this stede,
 To fisch that neuer fenne dede,
 Than her daien in londe
 1810 In al this farafines honde.

Beues smot his hors that it lep
 In to the fe that wel dep.
 Whan he in to the fe cam,
 Ouer the fe Y wot a-fwam;
 In a dai and in a night
 A-bar ouer that gentil knight.
 Whan he com of that wilde brok
 His gode stede him refede and schok,
 And Beues for hunger in that stounde
 1820 The hors threw him down to grounde;
 Allas! queth Beues, whan he doun cam,
 Whilom Ichadde an erldam,
 And an hors gode and snel,
 That men clepede Arondel;
 Now Ich wolde geue hit kof
 For a schiuer of a lof.

A-restede him ther a lite tide,
 His gode stede he gan bestride,
 And rod ouer dale and down,
 1830 Til he com to a gret toun ;
 The leuedi tharof ouer the castel lai,
 And Beues hire sone of fay,
 And wende ben al out of care,
 And thoughte wel to spede thare.
 Beues to the castel gate rit,
 And spak to hire aboue him fit:
 Dame, a-feide, that fit aboue,
 For that ilche lordes loue,
 On wham thin herte is on i-fet,
 1840 Geue me to day a meles met.
 The leuedi anwerde him tho,
 Boute thow fro the gate go
 The wer beter elles whar than her,
 Go or the tit an euel diner;
 Me lord, she feide, is a geaunt,
 And leueth on Mahoun and Teruagaunt,
 And felleth cristene men to grounde,
 For he hateth hem ase hounde.
 Be God ! queth Beues, I fwere an othe,
 1850 Be him lef and be him lothe,
 Her Ich wile haue the mete
 With loue or eighe whather I mai gee.
 The leuedi swithe wroth with alle,
 Wente hire forth in to the halle,

And tolde hire lord anon fore,
 How a man hadde i-fwore
 That he nolde fro the yete,
 Er he hadde ther the mete.
 The geaunt was wonder strong,
 1860 Rome thretti fote long.
 He tok a leuour in is hond,
 And forth to the gate he wond.
 Of Beues he nam gode hede,
 Ful wel a-knewe Beues is stede.
 Thow ert nome thef, Y wis,
 Whar stele thow stede Trenchefis
 That thow ridest vpon here?
 Hit was me brotheres Grandere.
 Grander, queth Beues, Y gaf hod,
 1870 And made him a kroune brod,
 Tho he was next vnder me fest
 Wel Y wot Ich made him preft,
 And high dekne I wile make the
 Er Ich euer fro the te.
 Thanne feide the geaunt, meiff fire,
 Slough thow me brother Grandere,
 For al this castel ful of golde
 A-liue lete the Ich nolde.
 Ne Ich the, queth Beues, I trowe ;
 1880 Thus beginneth grim to growe.

K

The geaunt that Ich fpak of er,
 The staf that he to fighte ber
 Was twenti fote in lengthe be tale,
 Thar to gret and nothing fmale.
 To fire Beues a-smot therwith
 A fterne ftrok withouten grith,
 Ac afailede of his diuis,
 And in the heued smot Trenchefis,
 That dede to grounde fel the ftede.
 1890 O! queth Beues, fo God me fpede,
 Thow haueft don gret vileinie,
 Whan thow fparde me bodi,
 And for me gilt min hors a-queld,
 Thow witeft him that mai nought weld.
 Be God! I fwere the an oth,
 Thow fchelt nought whan we te goth
 Langande me wende fram,
 Now thow haueft mad me gram.
 Beues is fwerde anon vp fwapte,
 1900 He and the geaunt togedre rapte,
 And delde ftrokes mani and fale,
 The nombre can nought telle in tale.
 The geaunt vp is clobbe haf
 And smot fo Beues with is staf,
 That his fcheld flegh fram him thore,
 Thre akres brede and fumdell more.

Tho was Beues in strong erur,
And karf ato the grete leuour,
And on the geauntes breft a-wonde
1910 That negh a-felde him to the grounde.
The geaunt thoughte this bataile hard,
Anon he drough to him a dart,
Thourgh Beues fcholder he hit fchet,
The blold ran down to Beues fet.
The Beues fegh is owene blod
Out of is wit he wex negh wod,
Vnto the geaunt ful fwithe he ran,
And kedde that he was doughti man,
And smot ato his nekke bon ;
1920 The geaunt fel to grounde anon.

Beues wente in at castel gate,
The leuedi a-mette ther ate.
Dame, a-feide, go geue me mete
That euer haue thow Cristes hete.
The leuedi fore a-drad withalle
Ladde Beues in to the halle,
And of eueriche fonde
That him com to honde,
A-dede hire ete al ther ferft,
1930 That she ne dede him no berft ;
And drinke ferft of the win
That no poifoun was ther in.

Whan Beues hadde ete inough,
A keuerchef to him a-drough,
In that ilche stounde
To stope mide is wonde.
Dame, dame, Beues fede,
Let fadde me a gode ftede,
For hennes Ich wile ride,
1940 I nel no lenger her abide.
The leuedi feide she wolde fawe,
A gode ftede she let forth drawe,
And faddeled hit and wel a-dight.
And Beues that hendi knight
Into the fadel a-lippte,
That no ftirop he ne drippte.
Forth him wente, fire Beuoun,
Til he com with oute the toun
Into a grene mede.
1950 Now, louerd Crist! a-fede,
Yeue it Brademond the king,
He, and al is offspring,
Wer right her vpon this grene,
Now Ich wolde of me tene
Swithe wel ben awreke,
Scholde he neuer go ne speke;
Now min hunger is me a-fet,
Ne lifte me neuer fighten bet.

- Forth a-wente be the strem,
 1960 Til a-com to Jurifalem,
 To the patriark a-wente cof,
 And al his lif he him schrof.
 And tolde him how hit was bego,
 Of is wele and of is wo.
 The patriark hadde reuthe
 Of him and ek of is truethe,
 And forbed him vpon his lif
 That he neuer toke wif,
 Boute she were clene maide.
 1970 Nai for sothe, fire Beues saide.
 On a dai agenes the eue
 Of the patriarke he tok is leue ;
 Erliche amorwe whan it was dai
 Forth a-wente in is wai.
 And al so a-rod him self alone,
 Lord ! a-thoughte whar mai I gone ?
 Whar Ich into Ingelonde fare ?
 Nai, a-thoughte, what scholde I thare,
 Boute yif Ichadde oft to gader
 1980 For to fle me stifader ?
 He thoughte that he wolde an hie
 In to the londe of Ermonie,
 To Ermonie that was is bane,
 To his lemman Jofiane ;

And al fo a-wente theder right
 A-mette with a gentil knight,
 That in the londe of Ermonie
 Hadde bore him gode companie ;
 Thai kiste hem anon with that,
 1990 And ather askede of otheres stat.
 Thanne feide Beues and lough,
 Ichaue fare hard inough,
 Sofred bothe hunger and chele,
 And other peines mani and fele,
 Thourgh king Ermines gile ;
 Yet Ich thenke to yelde is while,
 For he me fente to Brademond
 To haue flawe me that stonde ;
 God be thankede a-dede nought so !
 2000 Ac in is prifoun with meche wo
 Ichaue leie this feuen yare,
 Ac now Icham from him i-fare
 Thourgh Godes grace and min engyn,
 Ac al Ich wite it king Ermyn,
 And ne wer is doughter Jofiane
 Sertes Ich wolde ben is bane.

Jofiane, queth the knight, is a wif,
 Agen hire wille with meche strif.
 Seue yer hit is gone and more,
 2010 That the riche king Ynore

To Mombraunt hath hire wedde,
 Bothe to bord and to bedde,
 And hath the fwerd Morgelai,
 And Arondel the gode palfrai :
 Ac fithe the time that I was bore,
 Swiche game hadde Ich neuer before,
 Afe Ich hadde that ilche tide
 Whan I fegh king Ynor ride
 Toward Mombraunt on Arondel ;
 2020 The hors was nought i-paied wel,
 He arnede awai with the king
 Thourgh felde and wode withouten lefing,
 And in a mure don him caft,
 Almeft he hadde deied in haft.
 Ac er hii wonne the ftede
 Ropes in the contre thai leide,
 Ac neuer fithe withoute fable
 Ne com the ftede out of the ftale,
 So fore he was arneied that tide
 2030 Siththe dorfte no man on him ride.
 For this tiding Beues was blithe,
 His ioie kouthe he noman kithe.
 Wer Jofiane a-thoughte afe lele
 Alfe is me ftede Arondel,
 Yet fcholde Ich come out of wo.
 And at the knight he askede tho
 Whiderwardes is Mombraunt ?
 Sere, a-fede, be Teruagaunt !

Thow might nought thus wende forth,
 2040 Thow most terne al agen north.

Beues ternede his ftede,
 And rod north gode fpede ;
 Euer a-was pafaunt
 Til a-com to Mombraunt.
 Mombraunt is a riche cite
 In al the londe of Sarfine ;
 Nis ther non ther to i-liche,
 Ne be fele parte fo riche.
 And whan that hende knight Beuoun
 2050 Come withouten the toun,
 Thar with a palmer he mette
 And fwithe faire he him grette :
 Palmer, a-fede, whar the king?
 Sire, a-feide, an honting
 With kinges fiftene.
 And whar, a-feide, is the quene?
 Sire, a-feide, in hire bour.
 Palmer, a-feide, paramour,
 Yem me thine wede
 2060 For min and for me ftede.
 God yeue it, queth the palmare,
 We hadde driue that chefare.

Beues of is palfrei alighte,
 And fchrede the palmer as a knighte,

And gaf him is hors that he rod in
For is bordon and is fklauin.
The palmer rod forth ase a king,
And Beues wente alfe a bretheling.
Whan he com to the castel gate,
2070 Anon he fond ftonde thar ate
Mani palmer thar ftonde
Of fele kene londe,
And he askede hem in that ftede
What hii alle thar dede.
Thanne feide on that thar ftod,
We beth i-come to haue gode
And fo thow ert also.
Who, queth Beues, fchel it vs do?
The quene, God hire fchilde fro care!
2080 Meche fhe leueth palmare;
Al that fhe mai finden here,
Eueriche dai in the yere,
Faine fhe wile hem fede
And yene hem riche wede,
For a knightes loue, Beuoun,
That was i-boren at South Hamtoun;
To a riche man fhe wolde him bringe
That kouthe telle of him tiding.
Whanne, queth Beues, fchel this be don?
2090 A-feide, betwene middai and noun.
Beues hit ful wel he fai
Hit nas boute yong dai,

82 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

A-thoughte that he wolde er than
 Wende aboute the barbican,
 For to loke and for to se
 How it mighte best be
 Yif he the castel wolde breke,
 Whar a-mighte best in reke;
 And al so a-com be a touret
 2100 That was in the castel i-set,
 A-herde wepe and crie,
 Thederward he gan him hie.
 O allas! she feide, Beuoun,
 Hende knight of South Hamtoun,
 Now Ichaue bide that day
 That to the treste I ne may,
 That ilche God that thow of speke,
 He is fals and thow ert eke.
 In al the feuene yer eche dai,
 2110 Jofiane, that faire mai,
 Was woned fwich del to make,
 Al for fire Beues fake.

The leuedi gan to the gate te
 The palmeres thar to fe;
 And Beues after anon
 To the gate he gan gon.
 The palmers gonne al in threste,
 Beues abod and was the laste,

And whan the maide fegh him thar
2120 Of Beues she nas nothing war ;
The femest, queth she, man of anour,
Thow schelt this dai be priour,
And beginne oure deis ;
The femest hende and corteis.
Mete and drinke thai hadde afyn,
Bothe piment and plente a wyn.
Swithe wel thai hadde i-fare,
Thanne feide the quene to palmare,
Herde euer eni of yow telle
2130 In eni lede or eni spelle,
Or in feld, other in toun,
Of a knight Beues of Hamtoun ?
Nai, queth al that thar ware.
What thow, she feide, niwe palmare ?
Thanne feide Beues and lough,
That knight Ich knowe wel inough.
Atour, a-feide, in is contre
Icham an erl and also is he :
At Rome he made me a spel
2140 Of an hors men clepede Arondel ;
Wide whar Ichaue i-went,
And me warfoun i-spent,
I fought hit bothe fer and ner,
Men telleth me that it is her ;
Yif euer louedestow wel that knight,
Let me of that hors haue a fight.

What helpeth it to make fable?

She ladde Beues to the stable.

Jofian beheld him before,

2150 She fegh his browe to tore ;

After Bonefas she gan grede,

At stable dore to him she fede,

Be the moder that me hath bore,

Ner this mannes browe to tore,

Me wolde thenke be his fafoun

That hit were Beues of Hamtoun.

Whan that hors herde neuene

His kende lordes steuene,

His rakenteis he al te rof,

2160 And wente into th[e] kourt wel kof,

And neide and made miche pride

With gret ioie be ech afide.

Allas! tho queth Jofiane,

Wel mani a man is bane,

To dai he worth i-laught

Er than this stede ben i-caught.

Thanne feide Beues and lough,

Ich can take hit wel inough,

Wolde ye, a-fede, yeue me leue

2170 Hit me scholde no man greue.

Take hit thanne, she fede,

And into stable thow it lede,

And teie it thar it stod,
 And thow schelt haue mede gode.
 Beues to the hors tegh,
 Tho the hors him knew and fegh,
 Hit ne wawede no fot
 Til Beues hadde the stirop;
 Beues into the fadel him threw,
 2180 Tharbi that maide him wel knew.
 Anon feide Jofian with than,
 O! Beues gode lemman,
 Let me with the reke
 In that maner we han i-speke,
 And thenk thow me to wiue tok
 Whan Ich me false godes forfok:
 Now thow haft thin hors Arondel,
 The fwerd Ich the fette schel,
 And let me wende with the fiththe
 2190 Hom to thin owene kiththe.

Queth Beues, be Godes name!
 Ichauē for the sofred meche schame,
 Lain in prifoun swithe strong,
 Yif Ich the louede hit were wrong.
 The patriark me het vpon me lif,
 That I ne tok neuer wif
 Boute she wer maide clene,
 And thow hauest feue yer ben a quene,

And eueri night a king be the,
 2200 How mightow thanne maide be?
 Merci, she feide, lemman fre,
 Led me hom to the contre,
 And boute the finde me maidewimman
 Be that eni man faie can,
 Send me agen to me fon
 Al naked in me fmok alon.
 Beues feide, fo I schel,
 In that forward I graunte wel.

Bonefas to fire Beues fede,
 2210 Sire, the is beter do be rede.
 The king cometh sone fro honting,
 And with him mani a riche king,
 Fiftene told al in tale,
 Dukes and erles mani and fale.
 Whan hii fond vs alle agon,
 Thai wolde after vs euerichon
 With wonder gret cheualrie,
 And do vs schame and vileinie;
 Ac formeste, fire, withouten fable
 2220 Led Arondel into the stable,
 And ate the gate thow him abide
 Til the king cometh bi the ride;
 A-wile the asken at the frome
 Whider thow schelt and whannes thow come,

Sai that thow hauest wide i-went,
 And thow come be Dabilent,
 That is hennes four iurne,
 Sai men wile ther the king fle,
 Boute him come help of some other,
 2230 And king Ynor is brother;
 And whan he hereth that tiding,
 Theder a-wile an highing,
 With al is power and is oft;
 Thanne mai we with lite boft
 Forth in oure wei go.
 Beues feide, it schel be fo,
 And Arondel to stable lad,
 As Bonefas him bad,
 And to the gate Beues yode
 2240 With other beggers that ther stode,
 And pyk and skrippe be is fide,
 In a sklauin row and wide.
 His berd was yelw to is breft wax,
 And to is gerdel heng is fax;
 Al thai feide that hii ne fighe
 So faire palmer neuer with eighe,
 Ne com ther non in that contre,
 Thus wondred on him that him gan fe;
 And so stode Beues in that thring
 2250 Til noun belle began to ring.

Fram honting com the king Ynore,
 And fiftene kinges him before,

Dukes, and erles, barouns, how fale,
 I can nought telle the righte tale.
 Mervaille thai hadde of Beues alle.
 Ynor gan Beues to him calle,
 And feide, palmer, thow comft fro ferre,
 Whar is pes and whar is werre?
 Trewe tales thow canft me fain.

2260 Thanne anwerde Beues again,
 Sire, Ich come fro Jurifalem,
 Fro Nazareth and fro Bedlem,
 Emavns castel and Synaie,
 Ynde, Erop, and Afie,
 Egippte, Grese, and Babiloine,
 Tars, Sefile, and Sefaoine,
 In Fris, in Sodeine, and in Tire,
 In Aufrik and in mani empire,
 Ac al is pes thar Ichauē went
 2270 Saue in the lond of Dabilent;
 In pes mai no man come thare,
 Thar is werre forwe and care.
 Thre kinges and dukes fue
 His cheualrie adoun ginneth driue,
 And meche other peple i-schent,
 Cites i-take and tounes i-brent;
 Him to a castel thai han i-driue
 That ftant be the fe vpon a cliue,
 And al the oft lith him aboute
 2280 Be this to daie a-is in doute.

King Ynor feide, alas! alas!
 Lordinges this is a fori cas;
 That is me brother ye witen wel,
 That lith beseged in that castel :
 To hors and armes, laffe and more!
 In hafte fwith the that wer thore,
 Thai armede hem anon be dene,
 Ynor and his kinges fiftene.

Stoutliche the liouneffe than
 2290 Afailede Beues that doughti man,
 And with hire is scheld tok
 So fterneliche, faith the bok,
 That doun it fel of is left hond.
 Tho Jofian gan vnderftonde
 That hire lord fcholde ben flawe,
 Helpe him the wolde fawe;
 Anon the hente that lioun.
 Beues bad hire go fitte adoun,
 And fwor, be God in trinite,
 2300 Bout the lete that lioun be,
 A-wolde hire fle in that deftreffe
 Afe fain ase the liouneffe.

Tho the ne moſte him nought helpe fighte,
 His ſcheld the brought him anon right,

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And yede hire fitte adoun faunfaile,
 And let him worth in that bataile.
 The liouneffe was stout and sterne,
 Agen to Beues she gan erne,
 And be the right leg he him grep,
 2310 Afe the wolf doth the scchep,
 That negh she braide out is sparlire.
 Tho was Beues in gret yre,
 And in that ilche felue veneu,
 Thourgh Godes grace and is vertu,
 The liouneffe so hard he smot
 With Morgelai that biter bot
 Euene vpon the regge an high,
 That Morgelai in therthe fligh.
 Tho was Jofian ful fain
 2320 To that hii were bothe flain,
 And Beues was glad and blithe,
 His ioie ne kouthe he no man kithe,
 And ofte he thankede the king in glori
 Of is grace and is viktori.
 Ac wo him was for Bonefas,
 And tho he segh non other it nas,
 A-fette Jofian vpon a mule,
 And ride furth a lite while,
 And metten with a geaunt
 2330 With a lotheliche femlaunt.
 He was wonderliche strong,
 Rome thrette fete long ;

His berd was bothe gret and rowe ;
 A fpace of a fot betwene is browe ;
 His clob was to yeue a ftrok
 A lite bodi of an ok.
 Beues hadde of him wonder gret,
 And askede him what a-het,
 And yef men of his contre
 2340 Were afe meche afe was he ?
 Me name, a-fede, is Afcopard ;
 Garci me fente hiderward
 For to bringe this quene agen,
 And the Beues her of flen ;
 Icham Garci is champioun,
 And was i-driue out of me toun,
 Al for that Ich was fo lite
 Eueri man me wolde fmite ;
 Ich was fo lite and fo merugh
 2350 Eueri man me clepede dwerugh,
 And now Icham in this londe
 I woxe mor, Ich vnderftonde,
 And ftrengere than other tene,
 And that fchel on vs be fene ;
 I fchel the fle hir yif I mai.
 Thourgh Godes help, queth Beues, nai.

Beues prikede Arondel afide,
 Agen Afcopard he gan ride,

And smot him on the scholder an high,
 2360 That his spere al to fligh;
 And Afcopard with a retret
 Smot after Beues a dent gret,
 And with is ofot aslintte,
 And fel with is owene dentte.
 Beues of is palfrai alighte,
 And drough his fwerd anon righte,
 And wolde haue smiten of is heued;
 Jofian befoughte him it were beleued.
 Sire, she seide, so God the faue!
 2370 Let him liuen and ben our knaue.
 Dame, a-wile vs betrai.
 Sire, she Ich ben is bourgh, nai.
 Thar a-dede Beues omage,
 And becom is owene page.
 Forth thai wenten alle thre,
 Til that hii come to the fe;
 A dromond hii fonde ther ftonde,
 That wolde into hethene londe,
 With farafines flout and fer,
 2380 Boute thai nadde no maroner.
 Tho hii fighe Afcopard come,
 Hii thoughten wel, alle and fom,
 He wolde hem furliche hem lede,
 For he was maroner god at nede.

Whan he into the schippe cam,
His gode bat an honde he nam,
A-drof hem out and dede hem harm,
Arondel a-bar to the schip in is arm,
And after in a lite while,
2390 Jofian and hire mule,
And drowen vp faile a[l]fo snel,
And failede forth faire and wel,
That hii com withouten enfoin
To the haven of Coloine.
Whan he to lond kem,
Men tolde the bischop was is em,
A noble man wis afn,
And highte Saber Florentin.
Beues grete him at that cas,
2400 And tolde him what he was.
The beschop was glad afn,
And feide, wolkome, leue cofin!
Gladder I nas fethe Ich was bore,
Ich wende thow haddeft be forlore.
Who is this leuedi schene?
Sire, of hetheneffe a quene;
And she wile, for me sake,
Cristendome at the take.
Who is this with the gret vifage?
2410 Sire, a-fede, hit is me page;
And wile ben i-cristnede also,
And Ich bidde that ye hit do.

The nexfte dai after than,
The beſchop criſtnede Jofian.
For Aſcopard was mad a koue,
Whan the beſchop him ſcholde in ſchoue,
A-lep anon vpon the benche,
And feide, preſt, wiltow me drenche?
The deuel geue the helle pine!
2420 Icham to meche to be Criſtine.

After Jofian is criſting,
Beues dede a gret fighting;
Swich bataile dede neuer non
Criſtene man of fleſch ne bon,
Of a dragoun ther beſide
That Beues ſlough ther in that tide,
Saue fire Launcelet De Lake,
He fought with a fur drake;
And Wade dede alſo;
2430 And neuer knightes bouté thai to.
And Gii a Warwik, Ich vnderſtonde,
Slough a dragoun in North Humberlonde.
How that ilche dragoun com ther,
Ich wille yow telle in what maner.
Thar was a king in Poyle londe,
And another in Calabre, Ich vnderſtonde:
This twe kinge foughte i-fere
More than foure and twenti yere,

That hii neuer pes nolde
 2440 Naither for feluer ne for golde,
 And al the contre, faundoute,
 Thai distreude hit al aboute :
 Thai hadde mani mannes kours,
 Whar thourgh hii ferden wel the wors;
 Tharfore he deide in dedli finne,
 And helle pine thai gan hem winne.
 After in a lite while
 Thai be come dragouns vile,
 And so thai foughte dragouns i-fere,
 2450 Mor than foure and thretti yere.
 An ermite was in that londe,
 That was feld of Godes fonde ;
 To Jhesu Crist a-bed abone
 That he deliure the dragouns fone
 Out of that ilche ftede,
 That hii na more harm ne dede.
 And Jhesu Crist, that fit in heuene,
 Wel herde that ermites fteuene,
 And grauntede him is praier.
 2460 Anon the dragouns bothe i-fere
 To here flight and flowe awai,
 Thar neuer eft man hem ne fai.
 That on fleggh anon with than
 Til a-com to Toscan,
 That other dragoun is flight nome
 To feinte Peter is brige of Rome ;

Thar he fchel leggen ay,
 Til hit come domes dai.
 And eueri feue yer ones,
 2470 Whan the dragoun moweth is bones,
 Thanke cometh a roke and a stink
 Out of the water vnder the brink,
 That men ther of taketh the feure
 That neuer after mai he keure ;
 And who that nel nought leue me,
 Wite at pilgrimes that ther hath be,
 For thai can telle yow, I wis,
 Of that dragoun how it is.
 That other thanne flegh and highe
 2480 Thourgh Toskan and Lombardie,
 Thourgh Prouince, withouten enfoine,
 Into the londe of Colayne ;
 Thar the dragoun gan ariue,
 At Colayne vnder a cliue.
 His eren were rowe, and ek long ;
 His frount be fore hard and strong ;
 Eighte tokes at is mouth stod out,
 The lefte was feuentene ench about ;
 The her the cholle vnder the ching ;
 2490 He was bothe leith and grim ;
 A-was i-maned afe a stede ;
 The heued a-bar with meche pride ;
 Betwene the scholder and the taile
 Foure and twenti fot faunfaile ;

His taile was of gret stringethe,
Sextene fot a-was a lingthe ;
His bodi afe a win tonne;
Whan hit fchon the brighte sonne,
His wingges fchon fo the glas ;
2500 His fides wer hard afe eni bras ;
His brest was hard afe eni fton ;
A foulere thing nas neuer non.
Ye that wile a ftonde dwelle,
Of his stringethe I mai yow telle.

Beues yede to bedde anight
With torges and with candel light.
Whan he was in bedde i-brought,
On Ihesu Crist was al is thought.
Him thoughte a king that was wod
2510 Hadde wonded him ther a-ftod ;
He hadde wonded him biter and fore,
A-wende a-mighte leue na more,
And yet him thoughte a virgine
Him broughte out of al is pine.
Whan he of is flepe abraid,
Of is fweuene he was afraid.
Thanne a-herde a reuli cri,
And befoughte Ihesu merci,
For the venim is on me throwe,
2520 Her I legge al to blowe,

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And roteth me flesch fro the bon,
 Bote ne tit me ~~neuer~~ mo.
 And in is cri a-feide allas!
 That euer yet I maked was!
 Anon whan hit was dai light
 Beues awakede, and askede right,
 What al that cri mighte ben?
 His men him anwerde agen,
 And feide that he was a knight,
 2530 In bataile he was holden wight;
 Alse a-wente him to plaie
 Aboute her in this contrai,
 In this contre avireoun,
 A-mette with a vile dragoun,
 And venim he hath on him throwe;
 Thar a-lithe al to blowe.
 Lord Crist! queth Beues tho,
 Mai eni man the dragoun flo?
 His men anwerde withouten lesing,
 2540 Thar nis neither emperur ne king
 That come thar the dragoun were,
 An hondred thofend men and more,
 That he nolde flen hem euerichon,
 No scholde hii neuer thannes gon.
 Afcopard a-feide, whar ertow?
 Icham her, what wille now?
 Wile we to the dragoun gon?
 Thourgh Godes help we scholle him flo[n].

- Ya, fire, fo mot I the,
 2550 Bletheliche wile I wende with the.
 Beues armede him ful wel,
 Bothe in yrene and in stel,
 And gerte him with a gode bronde,
 And tok a spere in is honde ;
 Out ate gate he gan ride,
 And Afcopard be his fide ;
 Alfe hii wente in here plegging
 Hii speke of mani felkouth thing.
 That dragoun lai in is den,
 2560 And fegh come the twei men ;
 A-made a cri and a wonder,
 Afe hit were a dent of thonder.
 Afcopard was adrad fo fore,
 Forther dorste he go na more
 A-feide to Beues that was is fere ;
 A wonder thing ye mai here.
 Beues feide, haue thow no doute,
 The dragoun lith her aboute ;
 Hadde we the dragoun wonne,
 2570 We hadde the feireste pris vnder the sonne.
 Afcopard fwor, be fein Jon !
 A fot ne dorste he forther gon.
 Beues anfw[er]de, and feide tho,
 Afcopard, whi feistow fo ?
 Whi scheltow afered be[n]
 Of thing that thow might nought fen ?

A-fwor alfe he moſte then
 He nolde him neither hire ne ſen ;
 Icham weri, Ich mot haue reſte,
 2580 Go now forth and do the beſte.
 Thanne ſeide Beues this wordes fre,
 Schame hit is to terne age.
 A-ſmot his ſtede be the fide,
 Agen the dragoun he gan ride ;
 The dragoun ſegh that he cam,
 Yenande agenes him anan,
 Yenande and gapande on him ſo
 Aſe he wolde him ſwolwe tho.
 Whan Beues ſegh that ilche fight
 2590 The dragoun of ſo meche might,
 Hadde therthe ſprede anon
 For drede a-wolde ther in han gon.
 A ſpere he let to him glide,
 And ſmot the dragoun on the fide ;
 The ſpere ſterte agen anon,
 So the hail vpon the ſton,
 And to barſt on pices fwe.
 His ſwerd he drough alfe bliue ;
 Tho thai foughte, alfe I yow fai,
 2600 Til it was high noun dai.
 The dragoun was atened ſtronge
 That oman him ſcholde ſtonde ſo longe ;
 The dragoun harde him gan afaile,
 And ſmot his hors with the taile,

Right amideward the hed,
 That he fel to grounde ded.
 Now is Beues to grounde brought,
 Helpe him God that alle thing wrought !
 Beues was hardi and of gode hert,
 2610 Agen the dragoun anon a-ftert,
 And harde him a-gan afaile,
 And he agen with strong bataile ;
 So betwene hem lefte that fight
 Til it was the therke night ;
 Beues hadde thanne fwich thrafft,
 Him thoughte his herte to barft ;
 Thanne segh he a water him beside,
 So hit mighte wel betide ;
 Fain a-wolde theder fien,
 2620 He ne dorste fro the dragoun ten ;
 The dragoun afailede him fot hot,
 With is taile on his scheld a-fmot,
 That hit cleuede heuene ato,
 His left scholder dede also.
 Beues was hardi of gode hert,
 Into the welle anon a-ftert.
 Lordinges, herkneth to me now ;
 The welle was of fwich vertu,
 A virgine wonede in that londe
 2630 Hadde bathede ther in, Ich vnderstonde,
 That water was so holi,
 That the dragoun fikerli,

Ne dorste neghe the welle aboute
 Be fourti fote faundoute.
 Whan Beues perfeuede this,
 Wel glad a-was in hertte, I wis ;
 A-dede of is helm of stel,
 And coled him ther in fraiche wel,
 And of is helm a-drunk thore
 2640 A large galon other more ;
 A-nemeuede fein Gorge our leuedi knight,
 And fete on his helm that was bright.
 And Beues with eger mode,
 Out of the welle fone a-yode ;
 The dragoun harde him afaile gan,
 He him defendeth ase a man,
 So betwene hem leste the fight
 Til hit sprong the dai light.
 Whan Beues mighte aboute fen,
 2650 Blithe he gan thanne ben,
 Beues on the dragoun hew,
 The dragoun on him venim threw,
 Al ferde Beues bodi there
 A foule mesel alse yif a-were,
 Thar the venim on him felle
 His flesch gan ranclen and te belle ;
 Thar the venim was i-cast
 His armes gan al to braft ;
 Al to brosten is ventaile,
 2660 And of his hauberk a thosend maile.

Thanne Beues fone an highe
 Wel loude he gan to Ihesu crighe :
 Lord ! that rerede the Lazararoun,
 Diliure me fro this fend dragoun !
 Tho he fegh his hauberk toren,
 Lord ! a-feide, that I was boren !
 That feide, Beues thar a-frod,
 And leide on afe he wer wod ;
 The dragoun harde him gan afaile,
 2670 And smot on the helm with is taile,
 That his helm cleuede ato,
 And his bacinet dede alfo.
 Tweies a-ros and tweies a-fel,
 The thredde tim ouer threw in the wel,
 Thar inne a-lai vp right,
 A-neste whather hit was dai the night :
 Whan ouer gon was his fmerte,
 And rekeured was of is herte,
 Beues fet him vp anon ;
 2680 The venim was awei i-gon,
 He was afe hol a man
 Afe he was whan he theder cam.
 On is knes he gan to falle,
 To Ihesu Crift he gan to calle,
 Helpe ! a-feide, Godes fone,
 That this dragoun wer ouer come !
 Boute Ich mowe the dragoun flon,
 Er than Ich hennes gon,

Schel hit neuer a-flawe be
 2690 For noman in Cristente ?
 To God he made his praier,
 And to Marie his moder dere ;
 That herde the dragoun ther a-ftod,
 And fleghe awei afe he wer wod.
 Beues ran after withouten faile,
 And the dragoun he gan afaile ;
 With is fwerd that he out braide,
 On the dragoun wel hard a-laide,
 And fo harde a-hew him than,
 2700 A-karf ato his heued pan,
 And hondred dentes a-smot that stonde,
 Er he mighte keuren a wonde ;
 A-hitte him fo on the cholle,
 And karf ato the throte bolle.
 The dragoun lai on is fide,
 On him a-yenede swithe wide ;
 Beues thanne with strokes smerte
 Smot the dragoun to the herte,
 An hondred dentes a-smot in on,
 2710 Er the heued wolde fro the bodi gon.
 And the gode knight Beuoun,
 The tonge karf of the dragoun ;
 Vpon the tronsoun of is spere
 The tonge astikede for to bere ;
 A-wente tho withouten enfoine
 Toward the toun of Coloine.

Thanne herde he Beues ringe,
 Prestes, clerkes, loude finge ;
 A man ther he hath i-met,
 2720 And fwithe faire he hath him gret,
 And asked at ilche man tho,
 Whi thai ronge and fonge fo ?
 Sire, a-feide, withouten faile,
 Beues is ded in bataile :
 Thar fore for sothe I faie the,
 Hit is Beues dirige.
 Ne, queth Beues, be fein Martin !
 And wente to bischop Florentin.
 Tho the bischop hadde of him a fight,
 2730 A-thankede Ihesu ful of might,
 And broughte Beues into the toun
 With a faire professioun ;
 Thanne al the folk that thar was
 Thankede Ihesu of that gras.

On a dai fire Beues fede,
 Eue em what to rede
 Of me stifader Deuoun,
 That holdeth me londe at Hamtoun.
 The beschop feide anon right,
 2740 Kofin, Saber thin em is in Wight,
 And eueri yer on a dai certaine,
 Vpon themperur of Almaine

o

He ginneth gret bataile take,
 Beues, al for thine sake.
 He weneth wel that thow be ded,
 Thar fore, kofin, be me red,
 An hondred men Ich yeue the wighte
 Agen themperur to fighte,
 Stalworde men and fer :
 2750 And thow schelt wende to Saber,
 Sai, Ich grette him wel i-lome,
 Yif he han nede fendeth to me,
 Ich wile yow helpe with al me might
 Agen themperur to fight.
 While thow doft this ilche tourne
 The leuedi schel with me foiurne,
 And the page Afcopard
 Schel hire bothe wite and ward.
 Forth wente Beues with than
 2760 To his lemman Jofian;
 Lemman, a-feide, Ich wile go
 And avenge me of me fo,
 Yif Ich mighte with eni ginne
 Me kende eritage to winne.
 Swete lemman, Jofian fede,
 Who schel me thanne wiffe and rede?
 Beues fede, lemman min,
 Min em the beshop Florentin,
 And Afcopard, me gode page,
 2770 Schel the warde fro damage.

Ye haue Ich Afcopard, ſhe fede,
 Of no man ne ſtant me drede;
 Ich take the God and feinte Marie,
 Sone fo thow might to me thow highe.

Beues wente forth anon,
 With is men euerichon
 That the biſchop him hadde yeue,
 So longe thai hadde here wei i-driue,
 That hii come vpon a done,
 2780 A mile out of Southhamtone.
 Lordinges, to his men a-fede,
 Ye ſcholle do be mine rede.
 Haue Ich eni fo hardi on
 That dorre to Hamtoun gon,
 To themperur of Almaine,
 And fai her cometh, avintaine,
 Al preſt an hondred knighte,
 That fore his loue wilen fighte
 Bothe with ſpere and with launce,
 2790 Al freſch i-come out of Fraunce,
 Ac euer an erneſte and arage,
 Euer ſpeketh fre[n]ſche laungage,
 And fai, Ich hatte Gerard,
 And fighte Ich wile be forward,
 And of the meiſtri Icham fure
 Yif he wile yilde min hure?

Forthther com on redi reke,
 That renabliche kouthe Frensch speke;
 Sire, a-fede, Ich wile gon
 2800 The mesage for don anon.
 Forth a-wente to the castel gate,
 The porter a-mette ther ate,
 To themperur he hath him lad,
 Al a-feide afe Beues him bad.
 Themperur and Beues fete i-fere
 That ilche night at the fopere,
 Themperur askede him what a-het?
 Gerard a-fede alfe fket.
 Gerard, a-feide, for soth I wis
 2810 This leuedi hadde her er this
 An erl to lord or Ich hire wedde,
 A fone betwene hem to thai hadde,
 A proud wreche and a ying,
 And for sothe a lite gadling;
 So was is fader of proude mode,
 I-comen of fum lether blode,
 His fone that was a proud garfoun,
 Men hem clepede Beuoun.
 Sone he was of age
 2820 A-folde me his eritage,
 And spente his panes in scham and schonde,
 And fithe flegh out of Ingelonde.

Now hath he her an em in wight,
 Sire Sabér, a wel strong knight,
 And cometh with gret barnage,
 And cleimeth his eritage,
 And ofte me doth her gret gile,
 And thow might ylden is while
 Him to fle with fwerd in felde,
 2830 Wel Ich wolde thin here yelde.

Sire, queth Beues, anon right,
 Ichaue knightes of meche might,
 That beth vnarmed her of wede,
 For we ne mighte non out lede
 Ouer the fe withouten aneighe,
 Tharfore, fire, fwithe an highe
 Let arme me knightes echon,
 And yef hem gode hors forth enon,
 An hondred men sent thow the self,
 2840 Afe mani Ichaue be min helf,
 Dight me the schip and thin men bothe,
 And Y schel fwere the an othe,
 That I schel yeue fwiche afaut
 On that ilche Sabaaout,
 That withinne a lite while
 Thow schelt here of a queinte gile.

Al thus themperur hath him dight,
 Bothe hors, armes, and knight,

110 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Thar to schipes with gode vitaile
 2850 Forth thai wente and drowe faile.
 In the schipe the knightes feten, Y wis,
 On of here another of his;
 Whan thai come amidde the forde
 Ech threw is felawe ouer the bord;
 Of themperures knightes euerichon
 Withinne bord ne leuede non.
 Saber hem ful wel y-fay,
 Afe he vpon is toure lay,
 Mani baner he fegh arered.
 2860 Tho was Saber fundel a-fered
 That themperur with is oft come,
 Biker he made wel y-lome.
 Beues wiste wel and fede
 That Saber him wolde drede;
 Vpon the higheste mastis top there
 He let fette vp a ftremere
 Of his fader armure,
 Saber the rather to make fure;
 For mani a time thar beforen
 2870 He hadde hit in to bataile boren.
 Tho the schip to londe drough,
 Saber hit knew wel inough,
 And thoughte and gan to vnderftonde
 That Beues was come in to Ingelonde.
 Lord! a-fede, hered thow be,
 That Ich mai me kende lord fe;

That he wer ded Ich was of drad,
 Meche forwe Ichaue for him had.
 A-wente with is knightes bliue
 2880 Thar the fchipes scholde ariue;
 Gither other gan to kiffe,
 And made meche ioie and bliffe;
 And Beues tolde him in a while,
 He hadde do themperur a gile.

Tho feide Beues with than,
 Haue Ich eni so hardi man,
 That dorre to Hamtoun gon
 Ouer the water fone anon,
 And fai themperur anon right,
 2890 That Inam no Frensche knight,
 Ne that Ine hatte nought Gerard,
 That made with him the forward,
 And fai him Ich hatte Beuoun,
 And cleymeth the feniori of Hamtoun,
 And that is wif is me dame,
 That schel hem bothe terne to grame,
 Now of hem bothe togadre
 I schel fonde wreke me fadre?
 Vp thar fterte an hardi on;
 2900 Sire, a-feide, Ich wile gon
 The meffage for doth hem bothe,
 And maken hem fori and wrothe.

Forth a-wente afe hot,
 Ouer the water in a bot;
 Forth a-went also whate
 In at the castel gate;
 At the foper alfe a-fet,
 Themperur he gan thus gret,
 Sire emperur, I the bringe
 2910 A fwithe fertaine tiding,
 Wel the grete that ilche knight
 That fopede with the yerstene night;
 A-faith a-hatte nought Gerard,
 That made with the the forward,
 A-faith that he hatte Beuoun,
 And cleymeth the feniori of Hamtoun,
 And is i-come with the to speke,
 Of his fader deth to ben awreke,
 The to fle with schame and schonde,
 2920 And for to winne is owene londe.

Themperur herde of him that word;
 His fone stod before the bord;
 He thoughte with is longe knif
 Bereue that mesageres lif;
 A-threw is knif and kouthe nought redi,
 And smot his fone thourgh the bodi.
 The mesager spak a gainli word
 Before themperur is bord,

Thow gropedest the wif a-night to lowe,
 2930 Thow might nought fen aright to throwe ;
 Thow hauest so swonke on hire to-night
 Thow hauest negh for lore the fight ;
 Her thow hauest lither haunfel,
 A worfe the betide schel.
 And smot is hors with the spore,
 And arnde out at halle dore ;
 Wel and faire he hath him dight,
 And com agen to Beues in Wight,
 And tolde a-flough is sone for grame :
 2940 Beues lough, and hadde gode game.

Lete we fire Beues thanne,
 And speke of Jofiane
 That in Coloine was with Beues em,
 Til that he agen theder kem.
 In that londe that ilche while
 Thar wonede an erl that highte Mile.
 To Jofian he hadde his loue cast,
 And gan hire to wowen fast,
 Faire a-spak to terne hire thought,
 2950 And she feide a-was aboute nought.
 That erl was wroth in is manere,
 For Jofian him nolde here,
 And spak to hire with loude gret ;
 For wham, a-feide, scholde Ich it lete

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114 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Boute Ich mai haue of the me wille,
 Ich wile, a-feide, who that nille.
 She feide, while Ichaue Afcopard,
 Of the nam Ich nothing afard.
 For the wreththe, ne for thin oft,
 2960 Ne for the, ne for thine boft.
 And tho thoughte that erl Mile
 To do Jofian a gile:
 A leter he let for to write,
 In this maner he dede it a-dite,
 That Afcopard come fcholde
 To Beues, thar the letter him tolde,
 Into a caftel in an Yle,
 The brede of the water thre mile;
 To Afcopard thai come fnel,
 2970 Thai feide, Beues him grette wel,
 And befoughte for is loue
 In hafte a-fcholde to him come.

Forth went Afcopard afe hot,
 Ouer the water in a bot,
 Whan he was ouer the water come,
 Hii vnlek the gate at the frome;
 And whan he was comen withinne,
 Thai fperede him faft with ginne.
 Agen to Jofian Miles gan terne;
 2980 For wham, a-feide, fchel Ich it werne?

She thoughte for to kepe hire aplight,
 She fente a mafager to Wight,
 To Beues be letter, and tolde fore
 Altogedre laffe and more,
 Miles wolde haue is wille,
 And she bed him holde stille ;
 Nought thegh I scholde les me lif,
 Boute Ich were the weddede wif ;
 Yif eni man me scholde wedde
 2990 Thanne mot Ich go with him to bedde,
 I trowe he is nought now here
 That schel be me wedde fere.
 Y schel the wedde agenes the wille,
 To morwe Y schel hit fulfille,
 And kiste hire anon right,
 And fente after baroun and knight,
 And bed hem come leste and meste
 To anoure that meri feste.

The night is gon, that dai comen is,
 3000 The spufaile don hit is,
 With merthe in that toun,
 And ioie of erl and baroun ;
 And whan hit drough toward the night
 Here foper wer redi dight,
 And thegh thai richelich weren i-fed
 That erl wolde ben a-bed ;

116 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Jofian behet lede to bour,
 To haue hire vnder couertour;
 Vpon hire bedde thar ſhe fat,
 3010 That erl com to hire with that,
 With knightes gret compainie,
 With pyment and with ſpiſorie,
 With al the gamen that hii hedde
 For to make hire dronke a-bedde;
 Ac al another was hire thought,
 Ne gannede hire that gle right nought.

Sire, ſhe feide, to that erl fone,
 Ich bidde thow graunte me a bone;
 And boutte thow graunte me this one,
 3020 I ne ſchel the neuer bedde non;
 Ich bidde the at the ferſte frome
 That man ne wimman her in come,
 Belok hem thar oute for loue o me
 That no man ſe our priuite.
 Wimmen beth ſchamfaſt indede,
 And namliche maiden ſhe fede.
 That erl feide a-wolde faine,
 A-drof out bothe knight and ſwaine,
 Leuedies, maiden ſes and grome,
 3030 That non ne moſt ther in come,
 And ſchette the dore with the keie;
 Litel a-wende haue be ſo veie.

Jofian he com agen to,
 Lemman, a-feide, Ichaue i-do
 The bone, Ichaue do with lawe,
 Me schon I mot me seif of drawe,
 Afe Y neuer yet ne dede ;
 Adoun a-fet him in that stede :
 Thanne was before his bed i-tight,
 3040 Afe fele han of this gentil knight,
 A couertine on raile tre,
 For no man scholde on bed i-fe.
 Jofian bethoughte on highing,
 On a towaile she made knotte riding,
 Aboute his nekke she hit threw,
 And on the raile tre she drew ;
 Be the nekke she hath him vp tight,
 And let him so ride al the night.

Jofian lai in hire bed ;
 3050 No wonder though she wer adred !
 Dai is come in alle wife,
 Amorwe the barouns gonne arife,
 Sum to honten, and sum to cherche,
 And werkmen gonne for to werche.
 The sonne schon hit drough to vnder
 The barouns tharof hadde wonder
 That therl lai so long a bed,
 Gret wonder tharof he hedde.

Queth sum, let him lie stille,
 3060 Of Jofian he hath al is wille.
 Middai com, hit drough to noune,
 The barouns speke ther eft fonne.
 Queth the boldest, how mai this be?
 Wende Ich wile vp and i-fe.
 That baroun dorste wel speke,
 To the chaumber he gan reke,
 And smot the dore with is honde
 That al wide vpon it wonde.
 Awake, a-feide, fire erl Mile,
 3070 Thow hauest slepede so longe while
 Thin heued oweth to ake wel.
 Dame, let make him a caudel.
 Nai, queth Jofian at that sake,
 Neuer eft ne schel his heued ake.
 Ichauē so tyled him for that fore,
 Schel hit neuer eft ake more.
 Yerftendai he me wedded with wrong,
 And tonight Ichauē him honge;
 Doth be me al youre wille,
 3080 Schel he neuer eft wimman foille.
 Al hii made meche forwe;
 Anon rightes in that morwe,
 Sum hire demte thanne
 In a tonne for to branne,
 Without the toun hii pighte a wake
 Thar the fur was i-make,

The tonne thai hadde ther i-fet,
 Thai fette wode and elet.

Afcopard with inne the castel lay :
 3090 The tonne and al the folk he say ;
 Ful wel him thoughte that while
 That him trokede a gret gile,
 For he was in the castel beloke,
 The castel wal he hath to broke.
 He was maroner wel gode,
 A-ftertte into the falte fode,
 A fifcher he fegh fot hot
 Euer a-fwam toward the bot ;
 The fifcher wende fum fend it were,
 3100 Out of his bot he flegh for fere.
 Afcopard hente the bot an honde
 And him felf to the londe ;
 Toward the fur fafte a-fchok,
 Beues com and him of tok.
 Treitour, a-feide, whar haftow be ?
 This dai thow haueft betraied me.
 Nai, fire, Afcopard feide,
 And tolde Miles him hadde betraide.
 Toward the fur thai wente bliue ;
 3110 The preft that hire fcholde fchriue
 Godes bleffing mote he fonge,
 For that he held Joffane fo longe !
 In hire smok the stod naked,
 Thar the fur was i-maked ;

120 **SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.**

Afe men scholde hire for brenne,
 Beues on Arondel com renne .
 With is fwerd Morgelay,
 Afcopard com be another way,
 And flouen in that ilche ffounde
 3120 Al that hii aboute the fur founde.
 And that he hadde for is while,
 That proude erl fire Mile.
 A-fette Jofian on is palfrai,
 And wente forth into here wai ;
 Thai wente to fchip anon righte,
 And failede forth into Wighte.
 Wel was Saber paid with than
 Of Afcopard and of Jofian.

Beues and Saber fente here fonde
 3130 Wide into fele londe,
 And hii fente an hie
 After gret cheualrie,
 Of al the londe the stringefte knight
 That hii owhar finde mighte.

That emperur negh daide ;
 His wif confortede him and faide,
 Sire, she feide, doute yow nought,
 Of gode confaile Ichaim bethought.
 Te fcholle fende for fertaine
 3140 After your oft into Almaine,

And whan yowr oft is com togadre,
 Send to the king of Scotlonde, me fadre;
 He wile come to the an highe
 With wonder gret cheualrie,
 That thow derft haue no fore
 Of that thef Saber the hore,
 Ne of Beues that is me lothe,
 Yit ye fchollen hem hangen bothe.
 Tho the letters were yare

3150 The mafegers wer forth i-fare.
 In Mai, whan lef and gras ginth fpringe,
 And the foules merie to finge,
 The king of Scotlonde com to fighte
 With thretti thofend of hardi knighte
 Of Almaine, is owene barouny,
 With wonder gret cheualry.
 Lordinges, a-feide, ye witeth alle,
 Whan hii were before him in the halle,
 That ofte this thef, Saber the hore,

3160 Me hath aneied fwithe fore.
 Now is him come help to fighte
 Beues of Hamtoun, and hardi knighte,
 To farafins was folde gone longe;
 Ich wende hadde ben an honge;
 He me threteth for to flen,
 And for to winne is londe agen,
 With him he hath a geaunt brought;
 Erthliche man femeth he nought,

Ne no man of flesch ne felle,
 3170 Boute a fend stolen out of helle ;
 Ascopart men clepeth him ther oute,
 Of him Ichaue swithe gret doute ;
 Ac lordinges, a-feide, arme ye wel,
 We scholle befege hem in here castel ;
 The Ascopard be strong and sterk,
 Mani hondes maketh light werk.
 For thai wenten afe snel
 Til thai come to the castel
 Thar Saber and Beues weren inne,
 3180 Thai pighte paulouns and bente ginne.

Saber stod on is tour an high,
 Al that gret oft a-figh.
 Gret wonder therof he hade,
 The holi crois before him he made,
 And swor, be his berde hore,
 Hit scholde some of rewe it fore.
 Saber doun of his tour went,
 After al is knightes a-sent,
 Has armes lordinges ! hem gan segge,
 3190 Themperur theroute vs wile belegge ;
 Make we thre vintaine,
 That be gode and certaine,
 The ferste Ich wile me self out lede,
 And thow that oðer, Beues, a-fede,

And Afcopard the thredde fchel haue,
 With is gode grete ftaue.
 Be we thre vpon the grene,
 Wel Ich wot and nought ne wene,
 Mani man is thar oute gete
 3200 This dai fchel is lif forlete.
 Saber is horn began to blowe,
 That his oft him fcholde knowe.
 Lordinges, a-feide, ne doute yow nought
 Ye fcholle this dai beholde fo dought,
 That hem were beter at Rome
 Thanne hii hadde hider i-come.
 Tho themperur herde in caftel blowe,
 Thar bi he gan to knowe
 That hii armede hem in the caftel,
 3210 His knightes he het afe fnel:
 Has armes, lordinges, to bataile,
 Out hii cometh vs to afaile!
 Twei oftес thai gonne make,
 He of Scotlonde hath on i-take;
 Themperur that othe ladde;
 His deth that dai ther he hadde.

Out of the caftel cam before
 Saber with is berde hore,
 And in is compainie
 3220 Thre hondred knightes hardie;

Sire Morice of Mounclere
 His ftede smot agenes Sabere,
 His spere was fumdel kene,
 And Saber rod him agene ;
 Though is spere wer scharp i-grounde,
 Saber flough him in that ffounde ;
 Out on Arondel tho com Beuoun,
 And mette with is stifader Deuoun,
 And with a dent of gret fors,
 3230 A-bar him doun of his hors ;
 With Morgelay that wolde wel bite
 He hadde ment is heued of fmite ;
 His oft cam riding him to
 Wel ten thofend other mo,
 So stronge were tho hii come
 Themperur Beues hii benome,
 And broughte him an horfe tho,
 Tharfore was Beues fwithe wo.

Thar com in the thredde part,
 3240 With is batte Afcopard,
 Euer alfe he com than
 A-felde bothe hors and man ;
 Thar with was Beues wel a-paide,
 A-clepede Afcopard, and to him faide,
 Afcopard, tak right gode hede,
 Themperur rit on a whit ftede ;

Thin hiire Ifchel the yilde wel
 With that thow bringe him to me castel.
 Sire, a-feide, I fchel for fothe
 3250 Into the castel bringe him to the.
 Afcopard leide on wel inough,
 Bothe man and hors he flough;
 Thar nas non armur in that londe
 That mighte the geauntes ftrok aftonde.
 The king of Scotlonde with is bat
 A-gaf him fwiche a fori flat
 Vpon the helm, in that ftounde,
 That man and hors fel ded to grounde.
 Thanne anon, with oute foiur,
 3260 A-wente to that emperur,
 And hafteliche with might and main
 A-hente the hors be the rain.
 Wolde he nolde he, faire and wel,
 He bar hors and man to the castel.
 Of al that other fiker aplighte
 That were ensemled in that fighte,
 Of Scotlonde and of Almaine,
 Beues and Saber with might and maine
 With deth is dentes gonne doun driue,
 3270 That thar ne fcapede non aliue.
 And thus fire Beues wan the pris,
 And vengede him of is enemis,
 And to the castel thai wente i-fame,
 With gret folas, gle and game.

And that his stifader wer ded,
 Afe tit he let felle a led
 Ful of bich and of bremfton,
 And hot led let falle theron :
 Whan hit al ther fwither feth,
 3280 Themperur thar in a deth,
 Thar a-lay atenende:
 Wende his faule whider it wende.

His moder ouer the castel lai ;
 Hire lord fethen in the pich she fai ;
 So fwithe wo hire was for fore,
 She fel and brak hire nekke ther fore.
 Alfe glad he was of hire,
 Of his damme afe of is ftipfire,
 And feide, damme, foryeue me this gilt,
 3290 I ne yaf the nother dent ne pilt.
 Thanne al the lordes of Hamteschire
 Made Beues lord and fire,
 And dede him feute and omage,
 Afe hit was lawe and right vfage.
 Tho was Beues glad and blithe,
 And thanked God ful mani a fithe,
 That he was wreke wel inough
 Of him that his fader flough.
 Wel hafteliche she let fende
 3300 To Coloine after the bifchop hende,

And spusede Beues and Jofiane.
 Of no ioie nas ther wane;
 Though Ich discrue nought the bredale,
 Ye mai wel wite hit was riale;
 That ther was in alle wife
 Mete and drinke, and riche feruife.

Now hath Beues al is flat;
 Tweie children on him he beyat
 In the formeste yere,
 3310 Whiles that hii were i-fere.
 And Saber him redde thar
 Wende to the king Edgar,
 Tho withinne a lite stounde
 The king a-fond at Lounde.
 Beues aknes doun him fet,
 The king hendeliche a-gret;
 The king askede him what he were,
 And what nedes a-wolde there?
 Thanne anwerde Beuoun,
 3320 Ichatte Beues of Hamtoun;
 Me fader was ther therl Gii,
 Themperur for is leuedi
 Out of Almaine com and him slough,
 Ichauere wreke him wel inough;
 Ich bidde before your barnage
 That ye me graunte min eritage.

Bletheliche, a-feide, fone min,
 Ich graunte the be fein Martin!
 His marchal he gan beholde,
 3330 Fet me, a-feide, me yerde of golde;
 Gii is fader was me marchal,
 Also Beues is fone schal.
 His yerd he gan him ther take,
 So thai atonede with oute fake.

In fomer aboute Whitfontide,
 Whan knightes mest an horse ride,
 A gret kours thar was do grede,
 For to faien here al ther stede
 Whiche were swift and strong.
 3340 The kours was feue mile long;
 Who that come ferst theder han scholde
 A thofand pound of rede golde.
 Thar with was Beues paied wel,
 Meche a-treste to Arondel.
 Amorwe whan it was dai cler
 Arifeth bothe knight and squier,
 And lete fadlen here fole.
 Twei knightes hadde the kours i-ftole,
 That hii were to mile before,
 3350 Er eni man hit wiste y-bore.
 Whan Beues wiste this, fot hot
 Arondel with is spures a-fmot,

And is bridel faste a-fchok,
 Amide the kours he hem of tok.
 Arondel, queth Beues, tho,
 For me loue go bet, go,
 And I schel do faire and wel,
 For the loue reren a castel.
 Whan Arondel herde what he spak,
 3360 Before the twei knightes he rak
 That he com rather to the trefore,
 Than hii be half and more.
 Beues of his palfrai alighte,
 And tok the trefore anon righte;
 With that and with mor gatel
 He made the castel of Arondel.

Meche men praifede is ftede tho,
 For he hadde so wel i-go.
 The prince bad a-scholde it him yeue:
 3370 Nay, queth Beues, so mot Y leue,
 Though thow wost me take an honde
 Al the hors of Ingelonde.
 Siththe that he him yeue nele,
 A-thoughte that he it wolde ftele.
 Hit is lawe of kinges alle
 At mete were croune in halle,
 And thanne eueriche marchal
 His yerde an honde bere schal.

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130 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

While Beues was in that office,
 3380 The kinges sone that was so nice,
 What helpeth for to make fable,
 A-yede to Beues i-ftable,
 And yede Arondel to nighe,
 And also a wolde him vntighe ;
 And tho Arondel, fot hot,
 With his hint fot he him fmot,
 And to daschte al is brain.
 Thus was the kinges sone flain.

Men made del and gret weping
 3390 For forwe of that ilche thing.
 The king fwor for that wronge
 That Beues scholde ben an honge,
 And to drawe with wilde fole.
 The barnage it nolde nought thole,
 And feide, hii mighte do him no wors
 Boute lete hongen is hors,
 Hii mighte don him na more,
 For he feuede tho the king before.
 Nai, queth Beues, for no catele
 3400 Nel Ich lese min hors Arondele ;
 Ac min hors for to were
 Ingelonde Ich wile forfwere ;
 Min eir Ich wile make her
 This gode knight min em Saber.

In that maner hii wer at one,
 And Beues is to Hamtoun gone.
 A-tolde Jofian and Afcopard fore
 Altogedre, laffe and more.
 Beues lep on his rounci,
 3410 And made is fwein Terri,
 That Saber is fone is;
 And whan Afcopard wifte this,
 Whiche wei hii holde take,
 Agen to Mombraunt he gan fchake
 To betraie Beues, afe ye mai fe,
 For he was fulle in pouerte;
 For whan a man is in pouerte falle
 He hath fewe frendes with alle.

To him feide king Ynore,
 3420 Treitour, whar haftow be thus yore?
 Sire, a-feide, haue fought the quene,
 And haue hadde for hire meche tene.
 Sire, a-feide, certeine for fothe
 Yet Ich kouthe bringe hire to the.
 Ich wile the yeue a kingdom right,
 Bring thow me that leuedi bright.
 Queth Afcopart, therto I graunt,
 Be Mahoun and be Tervagaunt!
 So that Ichaue fourti knightes,
 3430 Stout in armes and strong in fightes,

For Beues is ful sterne and floute,
 Of him Ichaue swithe gret doute;
 He ouercom me ones in bataile,
 Me behoueth help him to afaile.
 King Ynor grauntede anon rightes,
 He let him chefe fourti knightes,
 And armede hem in yrene wede,
 And with Afcopard thai yede.

Now lete we be this Afcopard,
 3440 And speke of Beues that rit forthward
 In is wei til Ermonie,
 Thourgh Fraunce and thourgh Normondie.
 And Jofiane, Crist here be milde!
 In a wode was bestonde of childe:
 Beues and Terri doun lighte,
 And with here fwerdes logge pighte;
 Thai broughte Jofiane ther inne,
 For hii ne kouthe no beter ginne.
 Beues is feruise gan hire bede
 3450 To helpe hire at that nede.
 For Godes loue! she seide, nai,
 Leue fire thow go the wai,
 For forbede for is pite
 That no wimman is priuite
 To no man thourgh me be kouthe;
 Goth and wendeth hennes nouthe

Thow and the fwain Terry,
 And let me won the and oure leuedy.
 Forth thai wente bothe i-fere,
 3460 For hii ne might hire paines here.
 Allas! that ilche cherre,
 Hii wente fro hire alto ferre.
 Alfe hii were out of the weie
 She hadde knaue children tweie.
 Also she diliuered was,
 Thar com Afcopard goande apas,
 And fourti farafins, the Frensch feth,
 Al i-armede to the teth.
 For al hire forwe and hire wo,
 3470 Thai made hire with hem te go,
 And gret scorning of hire thai maked,
 And bete hire with fwerdes naked.
 Wo was the leuedi in that ffounde
 That was so beten and i-bounde,
 And in here wei ase thai gonne wende
 She feide, Afcopard freli frende,
 For bounte Ich dede the while,
 And fauede the fro perile,
 Tho Beues the wolde han flawe,
 3480 And i-brought of the lif dawe,
 Ich was the bourgh the schoft be trewe,
 Thar fore I praie on me the rewe,
 And geue me space a light wight
 For wende out of this folkes fight

134 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Te do me nedes in priuite,
 For kende hit is wimman to be
 Schamfaste and ful of corteisie,
 And hate dedes of fileinie.
 Afcopard anwerde here tho,
 3490 Whider thou wilt, dame, thou schelt go,
 So Ichaue of the a fight.
 Thanne Jofian anon right,
 Out of the way she gan terne
 Ase she wolde do hire dedes derne.

While she was in Ermonie,
 Bothe fyfik and firgirie
 She hadde lerned of meisters grete,
 Of Boloynes the gras and of Tulete,
 That she knew erbes mani and fale
 3500 To make bothe boue and bale.
 On she tok vp of the grounde,
 That was an erbe of meche mounde
 To make a man in femblaunt there
 A foule mesel alse yif a were;
 Whan she hadde ete that erbe, anon
 To the farafines she gan gon,
 And wente hem forth withoute targing
 Toward Ynore the riche king.
 Thai nadde ride in here way
 3510 Boue fif mile of that contray,

She was in femblaunt and in ble
 A foule mesel on to fe.
 Tho she was brought to king Ynore,
 To Afcopard a-feide thore,
 Who is this wimman thow haft me brought?
 What! a-feide, knowest hire nought?
 She is Jofiane the quene;
 Ichaue had for hire meche tene.
 Thanne feide Ynor, I praie Mahoun
 3520 Tharfore yeue the is malifoun!
 Swiche a leudi me to bringe
 So foule of fight in alle thinge.
 Led hire awai, God yeue yow schame!
 The and hire bothe i-fame.
 A castel hadde king Ynor
 Fro his paleise fif mile and mor,
 Theder Ynor bad hire lede,
 And finde hire that hire wer nede.
 Tho Afcopard, withouten dwelling,
 3530 In to that castel gan hire bring
 In wilderneffe vpon a plaine,
 And half a yer a-was hire wardaine.

Now lete we be of this leuedi,
 And speke of Beues and of Terri.
 Beues agen is wei benam,
 Into the logge that he becam

136 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Fond he ther nother yong ne elder,
 Boute twei hethene knaue childer;
 Swithe faire children with alle
 3540 Alfe hii were fro the moder falle;*
 Beues fel thar doun and fwough:
 Terri wep and him vp drough,
 And kourfede biter that while
 Ascopard is trefoun and is gile.
 The kottede here forers of ermin,
 The yonge children wende ther in;
 Thar nolde hii no longe abide,
 Thei lope to horfe and gonne ride;
 In the wode a forfter thai mette,
 3550 And fwithe faire thai him grette;
 God the bleffe, fire! Beues fede,
 Sighe the eni leuedi her forth lede
 Owhar be this ilche way?
 Sire, for Gode! a-feide, nay.
 What dones man, ertow bacheler?
 Sire, a-feide, a forfter.
 Forfter, so Crist the be milde!
 Wiltow lete cristen this hethen childe?
 Right lo now hit was i-bore,
 3560 And yong hit hath is moder forlore;
 Wilt thou kep it for of min a-fede,
 And Ischel quite wel the mede?
 The forfter him grauntede ther,
 To kepe hit al the feuer yer.

Sire, what schel it hote yet ?
 Gii, a-fede, afe me fader het ;
 Right fone fo he is of elde,
 Tech him bere spere and schelde.
 That child the forfter he betok,
 3570 And forth in is wei a-schok.
 Another man a-mette there,
 That feide a-was a fischere,
 Ten mark Beues him betok,
 And that other child to lok,
 And he him felf at the cherche ffile
 He let neuene the child Mile.
 Thar nolden lengere abide,
 Thai lope to hors and gonne ride
 Ouer dale and ouer doun,
 3580 Til thai come to a gret toun,
 And at a faire in thai lighte,
 And riche foper thai gonne hem dighte.
 Beues at a wendowe lokede out,
 And fegh the strete ful aboute
 Of stedes wrien and armes bright,
 A wonder him thoughte what it be might :
 At here oteffe he askede there
 What al the ftoute stedes were ?
 Sire, a-feide, veraiment,
 3590 Thai ben come for a tornement,
 That is cride for a maide faire,
 A kinges doughter and is air.

138 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

Who that thar be beste knight,
 And fireth him stoutliche in that fight,
 He schel haue that maide fre,
 And Aumbeforce the faire contre.
 Thanne seide Beues vnto Terry,
 Wile we tornaie for that leuedy?
 Ye fire, a-fede, be sein Thomas of Ynde!

3600 Whan wer wened he by hinde,
 We scholle lete for non nede
 That we ne scholle manliche forth vs bede.

Amorwe the lauerkes fonge,
 Whan that the light day was spronge,
 Beues and Terry gonne arise,
 And greithede hem in faire queintife;
 Here armes were riale of fight,
 With thre eglen of asur bright,
 The chaumpe of gold ful faire tolede,
 3610 Portraid al with rosen rede.

And Terri, Saberes sone of wight,
 In riche armes also was dight.
 Afe thai com ride thourgh the toun,
 Erles, barouns of renoun,
 Hadde wonder of here armes flie,
 In that londe neuer swich thai fie.

The trompes gonne here Beues blowe,
 The knightes riden out in a rowe,

And tho the tornement began.

3620 Thar was famned mani a man
 The tornement to beholde,
 To se the knightes flout and bolde.
 Thai lede on ase hii were wode,
 With fwerdes and with maces gode;
 Thar nolde no man other knowe,
 Thar men mighte se in lite throwe
 Knightes out of fadel i-boren,
 Stedes wonne and ftedes loren.
 The kinges fone of Afie

3630 Thoughte wenne the meistrie,
 Out of the reinge he com ride,
 And Beues nolde no leng abide,
 He rod to him with gret randoum,
 And with Morgelai is fauchoun
 The prince a-felde in the feld;
 He was boren hom vpon is scheld.
 And also Beues adoun bar
 A noble duk that was thar,
 In Aumbeforce cleped a-wes

3640 Balam of Nuby, withouten les,
 Taile ouer top he made him floupe,
 And felde him ouer is horsen croupe.
 And feuen erles he gan doun thrawe,
 Sum i-woned and sum y-flawe.
 Saber is fone, that highte Terry,
 Kedde that he was knight hardy,

He leide on alfe he wolde awede,
 And wan his lord mani gode stede.
 Alle tho that hii mighte hitte,
 3650 No man mighte here strokes fitte.
 So Beues demeinede him that dai,
 The maide hit in the tour fay,
 Hire hertte gan to him acorde,
 That she wolde haue him to lorde,
 Other with loue, other with strif.
 And euer, a-feide, he hath a wif,
 And feide, she was stölen him fro.
 Thanne faide the maide, now it is fo,
 Thow schelt al this feuen yere
 3660 Be me lord in clene manere,
 And yif the wif cometh the agen,
 Terry the swein me lord schel ben.
 Beues feide, so Ischel,
 In that forward I graunte wel.

Saber at Hamtoun lai in is bed ;
 Him thoughte Beues a wonde hed ;
 Away he was him thoughte that while,
 Toward fein Jemes and fein Gile.
 Whan he awok he was afraid,
 3670 To his wif is fweuene a-faid.
 Sire, she feide, thow hauest wrong
 That thow dwellest her so long ;

Alfe Icham wimman i-bore,
 Wif or child he hath forlore,
 Thourgh Afcopard he hath that gile.
 Twelf knightes Saber let atile
 In palmer is wedes euerichon,
 And armede hem right wel anon ;
 Here bordones were i-maked wel
 3680 With longe pikes of wel gode stel,
 And whan thai were fo i-dight
 To fchipe thai wente anon right,
 And pafede ouer the Grikiſche ſe ;
 Gode winde and weder hadden he.
 Whan thai come to the londe,
 Faſte thai gonne fraine and fonde
 In what londe were the quene,
 And men tolde hem albedene
 How the geaunt Afcopard
 3690 In a caſtel hire hadde to ward,
 In wilderneſſe al be felue.
 Tho Saber and is feren twelue,
 Thourgh help of God that ilche ſtounde,
 Sone thai han the caſtel founde.
 The caſtel aſe ſhe yede aboute
 For to diuiſe the toures ſtoute,
 Joſian lay in a tour an high,
 Saber and felawes ſhe ſigh,
 And to him ſhe gan to crie,
 3700 Help, Saber, for loue of Marie !

Tho Afcopard herde that fleuene
 How the gan Saber to neuene,
 He wente him out with hertte wroth,
 And be Mahoun a-fwor is oth
 To dethe a-scholde Saber dighte.
 His fclauin ech palmer of twighte,
 Tho schon here armur wel clere;
 Tho Saber and his felawes i-fere
 Aboute Afcopard thai thringe,
 3710 And harde on him thai gonne dinge,
 And hew him alle to pices smale,
 And broughte Jofian out of bale;
 And hasteliche tho, veraiment,
 Jofian with an oiniment,
 Hire coulur that was lothli of fight
 She made bothe cler and bright.

Tho Saber that was wis of dede,
 Jofian hire dighte in palmers wede,
 And forth thai wente hasteli
 3720 To feche Beues and fire Terri;
 Seue yer togedres thai him fought,
 Er than hii him finde noughte.

In grete Grese, so faith the bok,
 Saber gret fikenesse tok,
 That other half yer in none wife
 Ne mighte he out of is bed arise,

And trefor he nadde na more
 Than half a mark of olde store.
 While Jofian was in Ermonie,
 3730 She hadde lerned of minftralcie
 Vpon a fithle for to play
 Staumpes notes garibles gay;
 Tho she kouthe no beter red
 Boute in to the bourgh anon she yed,
 And boughte a fithle, so faith the tale,
 For fourti panes of one menstrale;
 And alle the while that Saber lay,
 Jofian euerich a day
 Yede aboute the cite withinne,
 3740 Here softenaunfe for to winne;
 Thus Jofian was in fwiche destresse
 While Saber lai in is fikneffe.
 At that other half yer is ende,
 Swiche grace God him gan fende,
 And heled him of his maladie,
 And forth thai wente haftelie
 Beues and Terry for to feche,
 Wheder that God hem wolde teche.
 So thourgh a toun thai com thringe
 3750 Thar Beues was in also a kinge;
 A-broughte Jofian at here inne,
 And wente te toun here mete to winne.
 Whan he com to the castel gate,
 Terry is sone a-mette ther ate,

That was ftiward of al that londe ;
 And Saber gan to vnderftonde
 That hit was is fone Terry,
 And bad him for loue of our leuedy,
 And for loue of the gode rode,
 3760 Yeue him fum what of hire gode.
 Terry beheld Saber-ful blue,
 And feide, palmer, fo mot Y priue,
 Thow schelt haue mete riche,
 For loue of me fader thert iliche.
 So feide the moder, fone, that i-was :
 And Terry him in is armes las,
 And gonne cleppen and to kiffe,
 And made meche ioie and bliffe.
 Saber Jofian wel faire gan dighte,
 3770 And broughte hire to the caftel righte,
 And tok hire fire Beues to honde,
 Ne cam him neuer leuer fonde.
 Louerd Crift ! queth Jofian tho,
 Swithe wel is me bego
 That Ichaue me lord i-fonde ;
 Hadde Ich me children hol and fonde !
 That hii were ded wel fhe wende.
 Beues after hem let fende ;
 Than com the fifcher and the forfter,
 3780 And broughte the children of fair cher ;
 Thanne weddede Terry
 Of that londe the riche leuedy,

And after mete thar it was
 The children pleide at the taluas,
 And to the iustes thai gonne ride :
 Thar was ioie be eueri fide.

Thanne fire Beues and fire Terry
 Wente hem in til Ermonie,
 And Jofian and fire Sabere,
 3790 And Miles and Gii bothe ifere.
 With that was come king Ynore
 To yeue bataile Ermyn the hore ;
 I-pight he hadde is pauloun
 To befege him in that toun ;
 With that com Beues in that tide
 With gret folk be that other fide.
 Tho was Ermyn afered fore
 For trefoun he hadde don him before ;
 Agen Beues anon a-yede
 3800 And merci cride of his mif-dede,
 And fire Beues tho, veraiment,
 Forgaf him alle is mauntalent,
 And feide a-wolde anon righte
 Agen Ynor take the fighte.
 Out of the cite Beues rod,
 And al is oft withouten abod,
 And flough doun rightes mani and fale,
 Sixti thofand told in tale.

T

146 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

And Beues threw Ynor adoun,
 3810 And fente him Ermin to prifoun.
 He gan him take be the honde,
 The king Ermin gan vnderftonde
 That he ne ſchel nought ſcape awai,
 Withoute gret ranſoun for to pai.
 Tho ſwor Ynor to king Ermin,
 Be Mahoun and be Apolyn!
 That gret raunſoun paie he wolde
 Sixti pound of rede golde,
 Foure hondred beddes of felke echon,
 3820 Quiltes of gold thar vpon,
 Foure hondred copes of gold fyn,
 And aſe fele of maſlin.
 Ye, ſeide Beues, a-ſend it me,
 And wend hem to the contre.
 A maſager a-fente with main
 To Tabefor his chaumberlain,
 And he him fente that raunſoun;
 Thus com Ynor out of prifoun.

Now let we be of king Ynore,
 3830 And ſpeke we of Ermin the hore
 That in is bedde fike lay;
 So hit beſel vpon a day,
 Er he out of this world went,
 After Beues children a-fent.

He clepede to him fire Gii,
 And with is croune gan him crouny,
 And gaf him alle is kenedom ;
 Sone thar after hit becom,
 That a-daide at the ende ;
 3840 To heuene mote his faule wende !

Thanne fire Beues and fire Gii,
 Al the londe of Ermony
 Hii made Cristen with dent of fwerd,
 Yong and elde, lewed and lered.
 So hit befel vpon an eue
 Saber of Beues tok leue,
 Hom te wende to his contre,
 His wif his children for to fe.
 Ne stente neuer fire Saber
 3850 Til that he in Inglelonde were :
 Wel fore aneighed schel Beues be
 Er than he Beues eft i-fe.
 The king Ynor hadde a thef,
 God him yeue euel pref
 For that he kouthe so wel stele !
 He stel Beues Arondele
 With his charmes that he kouthe,
 And broughte hit Mombraunt be fouth,
 And presentede the king Ynore.
 3860 The king be Mahoun hath fwore
 That Beues scholde abegged fore
 The raunfoun that he hadde before.

Now fire Beues let we gan,
 And to fire Saber wile we tan.
 Saber at Hamtoun in bedde lay,
 Him thoughte that he Beues say
 In bataile wo begon,
 And al to hewe flesch and bon.
 Tho he abraide out of is fweuene,
 3870 To his wif a-tolde hit ful euene
 Altogedres how him met.
 O fire, she feide, withouten let,
 Be the fweuene ful wel I wat
 That Beues is in femple stat;
 He hath for loren Arondel,
 And that I wet finliche wel.
 Saber was wo for that fake:
 Eft scrippe and bordoun he gan take,
 And tok leue of his wif,
 3880 And to Beues a-wente belif.
 Beues was glad that he was come,
 And tolde his hors was him benome,
 A roboun hit stal ful yore
 And hath yeue hit to king Ynore.
 That Saber feide, a-thenketh me
 Boute yif Ich mighte winne it age.
 Agen to Mombraunt wente Saber,
 Thar men watrede the deftrer;

Hit haueth brestes thikke and proute.

3890 Which is the kroupe? terne aboute.

Aboute he ternede the deiftrer.

Vp behinde lep Saber,

And fmot the farafin ded adoun

With the pik of his bordoun.

To the king Ynor he gan grede,

Lo! Arondel Ich awei lede,

Ye him ftele with envie,

And Ich him feche before your eie.

The king Ynor was fwithe wo,

3900 And after Saber thai gonne go;

Thre thofend hath Saber befet:

Jofian ftound in a toret,

Al this folk the fegh ful wel,

And Saber com ride on Arondel:

Out of the tour the wente adoun,

And feide, Beues of Hamtoun,

Her cometh Saber vpon the ftede,

Ihefu Crist him yade him is mede!

Ac he is befet al aboute

3910 With wonderliche grete route;

Almoft he is point to fpille.

Has armes! Beues cride fchille.

Ferft fmot out the yonge king Gii,

And Miles with gret cheualry;

Thai com to Saber at that ftour,

And broughte Saber gode fokour,

150 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

And leide on with alle here might,
 And flowe farafines adoun right.
 Of al that fewede him fo yerne
 3920 To Mombraunt gonne neuer on terne ;
 That thai ner ded vpon the grene
 Eueri moder sone I wene :
 And thus Saber in this wifē
 Wan Arondel with is queintife.
 Now mowe ye here forthormore
 Ful ftrong bataile of king Ynore.
 Ac er than we beginne fighte,
 Ful vs the koipe anon righte !

The king Ynore him ros amorwe,
 3930 In his hertte was meche forwe.
 He let of fende and highing
 Thretti amirales and ten king.
 Thai armede hem in yrene wede,
 To Ermonie he gan hem lede ;
 Hii pighte paulouns and bente ginne
 For to befege hem ther inne,
 And Ynore clepede at that cas
 Morable and fire Judas.
 Redeth me, a-feide, aright,
 3940 Yif Ich mai vnderftonde this fight
 Agen Beues of Hamtoun,
 That is fo ftout a baroun ;

We redeth meintene your parti.
 He lep to hors and gan to crie,
 Sire Beues of Hamtoun, a-fede,
 That hauest thar inne gret ferede,
 And Ich her oute mani stout knight
 Ichau brought with me to fight,
 And yif we bataile schel abide,
 3950 Gret slaughter worth in either fide.
 Wiltow graunte be then helue
 That Ich and thow mote fighte of seleue?
 Yif thow flest me in bataile,
 Al min onour withouten faile
 Ich the graunte thourgh and thourgh,
 Bothe in cite and in bourgh.
 Here glouen thai gonne vp holde
 In that forward that Ynor tolde,
 And armede hem in armes brighte,
 3960 And lopen to horse anon righte,
 In an yle vnder that cite,
 Thar that scholde the bataile be.
 Ouer that water thai gonne ride,
 To hire Godes thai bede in either fide.
 Beues bad help to Marie sone,
 And king Ynor to sein Mahoune.
 Afe Beues bad helpe to Marie,
 To Teruagaunt Ynor gan crie,
 That he scholde help in that fight,
 3970 Also he was king of meche might.

With that hii ride togedres bothe,
 Afe men that were in hertte wrothe.
 So hard thai gonne togedres mete,
 And with here launces gonne grete,
 That thourgh the fcheldes the speres yode,
 At the breinies the dent with ftoðe.
 So harde thai threfte to gedre tho
 That here gerthes borfte ato,
 And felle to grounde bothe tho,
 3980 A fote nedes thai moſte go.
 Out of here fadles thai gonne ſpringe,
 And with fauchouns togedere flinge;
 Aither on other ſtrokes ſet,
 Of helm and ſcheld and bacinet
 The fure braſt out ſo brond i-brent,
 So fel and eger was either dent.
 Thus togederes thai gonne dinge
 Fram prime to vnderne gan to ringe;
 Alle that fighen hem with fight,
 3990 Seide neuer in none fight
 So ſtronge bataile fighe er than,
 Of farafin ne of Criſtene man.

At high midday the king Inore
 To Beues he ſmot a dent ful fore,
 That fercle of gold and is creſtel
 Fer into the mede fel;

Doun of the helm the fwerd gan glace,
 And karf right doun before is face,
 Doun right the vifer with is fwerd,
 4000 And half the her vpon is berd;
 Ac thourgh the help of Godes grace
 His flesch nothing atamed nas.
 Tho cride the farafins al at ones,
 This Beues with his grete bones
 Ful fone worth i-maked tame.
 Tho wex Beues in gret grame,
 And thoughte wel with Morgelay
 Yelden his strok yf that he may.
 To king Ynor he gan a-reche,
 4010 Anon withoute more speche,
 Vpon the scholder in that tide
 That half a fot hit gan in glide.
 For smertte Ynor in that stounde
 Fel aknes vnto the grounde,
 Ac vp he sterte in haste than,
 And in wraththe to Beues ran,
 And thoughte han Beues aqueld;
 And Beues keppte him with is scheld,
 And Ynore with the strok of yre
 4020 Made fle into the riuere,
 A large quarter of his scheld,
 That neuer nas atamed in feld.
 Or Ynor mighte his hond with drawe,
 Beues the knight of Cristene lawe

With Morgelay a-smot him tho,
 That his scheld he clef ato,
 And his left hond be the wrest
 Hit fleggh awei thourgh help of Crift.
 Whan Ynor hadde his hond lore,
 4030 He faught afe he wer wod ther fore,
 And hew to Beues in that tide,
 No ftrok ne moſte other abide.
 Tho Beues ſeggh is ftrokes large,
 He kepte his ftrokes with is targe;
 Tho Beues to Ynor gan flinge,
 And thourgh the might of heuene king,
 His right arm and is ſcholder bon
 He made fle to gronde anon.
 With that ftrok Ynor the Mombraunt
 4040 Cride, merci, Teruagaunt!
 Mahoun, Gouin and Gibiter,
 Refeue now me faule her,
 For wel Ich wot Icham dede!
 Tho Beues herde him ſo grede,
 He feide, Ynor let be that cri,
 And clepe to God and to Mari,
 And let the Criften er the deie,
 Or thow ſchelt go the worſſe weie,
 And withouten ende dwelle
 4050 In the ſtronge peine of helle.
 Nay, queth Ynor, ſo mot Y then,
 Criftene wile Ich neuer ben,

For min is wel the beter lawe.
 Tho Beues herde that ilche fawe,
 A-felde him doun withouten faile,
 And unlacede his ventaile,
 And tok him be the heued anon,
 And strok hit fro the scholder bon ;
 And on his spere he hit pighte.
 4060 And tho the cristen fighe that fighte,
 Thai thankede God in alle wise
 That Beues hadde wonne the prife.
 Thanne al the farafins lasse and more,
 That was y-come with king Ynore,
 Thai fighe her lordes heued arered,
 Sore thai weren alle afered ;
 Toward Mombraunt thei wolde fain,
 Ac Saber made hem terne again,
 And fire Beues and fire Terry,
 4070 And fire Miles and fire Gii,
 Slough hem doun rightes thore,
 That ther ne scapede lasse ne more.

Tho crownede thai Beues king in that lond
 That king Ynore held in hond ;
 And Jofiane, bright and schene,
 Now is she ther twies quene.
 On a dai thai wente ariuere,
 Thar com ride a masagere,

156 SIR BEUES OF HAMTOUN.

And euer he askede fer and ner
 4080 After the hende knight Saber.
 Anon Saber gan forthe springe,
 Mafager, a-fede, what tiding?
 Sire, a-fede, the king Edgare
 The driueth to meche bismare,
 Defereteth Robaunt thin eyr;
 For God queth that is nought feir.
 And fire Saber in haste tho
 Tok leue of Beues hom to go;
 And fire Beues, corteis and hende,
 4090 A-feide a-wolde with him wende,
 And fire Miles and fire Gii,
 And is owene sone Terry.

Now wendeth Beues in te Ingelonde
 With is knyghte fel to fonde;
 And Terry with is knightes fale,
 Sixty thofend told in tale,
 Thai lende ouer the fe beliue,
 At Southhamtoun thai gonne vp riue.
 Heruebourgh Saber is wif,
 4100 And Robaunt anon afe blif,
 Agen Saber come tho.
 Queth Saber, how this is i-go?
 And thai him tolde at the frome,
 That Edgar hadde here londes benome.

Thanne feide Beues fo mot Y the,
 Tharof Ich wile awreke be.

Anon the knight, fire Beuoun,
 His oft he let at Hamtoun,
 And toward Londen a-wente fwithe ;
 4110 His quene a-let at Potenhithe.
 He tok with him fex knightes,
 And wente forth anon rightes,
 And in is wei forth a-yode
 And pafede ouer Temfe flode ;
 To Westmenfter whan he com than
 A-fond the king and mani man,
 And on is kneis he him fet,
 The king wel hendeliche a-gret,
 And bad before his barnage
 4120 That he him graunte is eritage.
 Bletheliche, a-feide, fone min,
 I graunte the be feinte Martin !
 And alle the barouns that ther were
 On Beues made glade chere,
 Boute the ftiward of the halle,
 He was the worfte frend of alle.
 The king wolde haue yeue him grith,
 The ftiward feide, nay ther with,
 And feide, this for banniifte man
 4130 Is come the land agan,

And hath thin owene fone flawe;
 He hath y-don agenes the lawe,
 And yif a-mot forth er gon,
 A-wile vs flen euerichon.

Beues that herde a-was wroth,
 And lep to hors withouten oth;
 And rod to Londen that cite,
 With sex knightes in meine.

Whan that he to London cam
 4140 In Tour ftrete is in he nam,
 And to the mete he gan gon,
 And is knightes euerichon.

Let we now Beues be,
 And of the ftiward telle we
 That hateth Beues al fo is fo.
 Sixty knightes he tok and mo,
 In to Londene fone he cam,
 And into Chepe the wei he nam,
 And dede make ther a cri

4150 Among the peple hafteli,
 And feide, lordinges, veraiment,
 Hureth the kinges comaundement;
 Sertes hit is befalle fo,
 In your cite he hath a fo,
 Beues, that fleugh the kinges fone,
 That trefoun ye oughte to mone;

I comaunde, for the kinges sake,
Swithe anon that he be take.

Whan the peple herde that cri,
4160 Thai gonne hem arme hasteli,
And hii that hadde armur non
Thai toke staues and gonne gon;
Thai schette anon eueri gate
With the barres thai founde ther ate;
And fum thai wente to the wal
With bowes and with springal;
Eueri lane and eueri strete
Was do drawe with chaines grete,
That yif Beues wolde awei fien
4170 The chaines scholde him agen;
Boute herof Beues weste nought,
Help him God that alle thing wrought!
Beues at the mete sat;
He beheld and vnder yat
Al is fon that were ther oute;
He was afered of that route.
He askede at the tauarnere
That armede folk what it were?
And he answerde him at that sake,
4180 Thai ben y-come the to take.
Whan Beues herde him speke so,
To a chaumber he gan go

That he hadde seghe armur inne ;
 In haste the dore he gan vp winne,
 And armede ther anon rightes
 Bothe he and is sex knightes,
 And gerte him with a gode brond,
 And toke a spere in is honde,
 Aboute his nekke a doble scheld ;
 4190 He was a knight stout and belde.
 On Arondel a-lep that tide
 Into the strete he gan ride ;
 Thanne seide the stiward to fire Bef,
 A-yilt the treitour thow foule thef !
 Thow hauest the kinges sone i-slawe,
 Thow schelt ben hanged and to drawe.

Beues seide, be sein Jon !
 Treitour was Y neuer non ;
 That Ischel kethe hastely
 4200 Er than Ich wende fikerly.
 A spere Beues let to him glide,
 And smot him vnder the right side ;
 Thourgh is bodi wente the dent,
 Ded a-fel on the pauiment.
 A-fede anon after that dint,
 Treitour ! now is the lif i-tint ;
 Thus men schel teche file glotouns
 That wile misaie gode barouns.

- The folk com with grete route,
 4210 Befette Beues al aboute ;
 Beues and is sex knightes
 Defendede hem with al her mightes ;
 So that in a lite ffounde
 Fiue hondred thai broughte to gronde.
 Beues prikede forth to Chepe,
 The folk him folwede al to hepe,
 Thourgh Godes lane he wolde han flowe,
 Ac fone with in a lite throwe
 He was befet on bothe fide
 4220 That fle ne might he nought that tide.
 Tho com ther fot men mani and fale,
 With grete clobes and with fmale,
 Aboute Beues thai gonne thringe,
 And hard on him thai gonne dinge.
 Al Beues knightes in that ffounde
 Thar he were feld to grounde,
 And al te hewe fiefch and bon ;
 Tho was Beues wo begon,
 For he was on and hii wer ded,
 4230 For forwe kouthe he no red,
 That lane was fo narw y-wrought,
 That he mighte defende him nought ;
 He, ne Arondel is ftede,
 Ne mighte him terne for non nede.
 To Ihesu he made his praier,
 And to Marie is moder dere,

That he moſte paſe with is lif
 To ſen is children and is wif.
 Out of the lane a-wold ten,
 4240 The chynes held him faſte agen,
 With is ſwerd he ſmot the chayne
 That hit fel a peces twayne,
 And forth a-wente into Chepe ;
 The folk him folwede al to hepe,
 And all thai ſetten vp a cry,
 A-yilt the Beues haſtely !
 A-yilt the Beues ſone anon,
 And elles thow ſchelt the lif forgon !
 Beues ſeide, Ich yelde me
 4250 To God that ſit in Trinite,
 To non other man I nel me yelde,
 While that Ich mai me wepne welde.
 Now beginneth the grete bataile
 Of fire Beues withouten faile,
 That he dede agenes that cite ;
 Ye that wile here herkneth to me.

This was aboute the vnder tide ;
 The cri aros be ech aſide,
 Bothe of lane and of ſtrete,
 4260 Aboute him com peple grete,
 Al newe and freſch with him to fight ;
 Ac Beues ſtered him aſe gode knight,
 So that in a lite thrawe
 Fif thoſend thar was i-flawe

Of the strengeste that ther wore
 That him hadde yeue dentes fore :
 Ac euer his stede Arondel
 Faste faught with hertte lel,
 That fourty fote behinde and forn
 4270 The folk he hath to grounde i-born.
 Thus that fight leste longe
 Til the time of euefonge ;
 Tidinge to Potenhithe
 To Jofian also fwithe,
 That Beues in Londen was i-flawe,
 And i-brought of his lif dawe.
 Jofian thanne fel aswowe,
 Gii and Miles hire vp drowe,
 And confortede that leuedi bright
 4280 Hendeliche with alle her might,
 And askede hire what hire were ?
 And she tolde hem anon there,
 How Beues was in Londen slayn,
 And his knightes with gret pain ;
 Now kethe ye ben noble knightes,
 And wrekeþ your fader with your mightes.
 Sire Gii and Miles feide than
 To here moder Jofian,
 Dame, be him that herwede helle !
 4290 We scholle his deth wel dere felle.
 Thanne fire Miles and fire Gii
 Gonne hem arme hafteli,

And on here knes fet hem doun,
 And bad her moder benesoun.
 Sire Gii lep on a rabbit
 That was meche and nothing lite,
 And tok a spere in is hond,
 Out at the halle dore a-wond,
 Toward the cite of Londen toun;
 4300 And fire Miles with gret randoun
 Lep vpon a dromedary,
 To prike wolde he nought spary.
 Whan thai come to Londen gate
 Mani mn thai fonde ther ate,
 Wel i-armed to the teth,
 So the Frensche bok vs feth;
 Agen the childrer the yeue bataile,
 And hii agen withouten faile,
 And made of hem fo clene werk
 4310 That thai neuer spek with prest ne clerk;
 And afterward, ase ye may hure,
 Londe gate thai fette a-fure.
 Whan thai come withouten faile,
 Tho began a gret bataile,
 Betwene Bowe and Londen fton,
 That time stod vs neuer on.

Thar was a Lombard in the toun,
 That was scherewed and feloun;

He armede him in yrene wede,
 4320 And lep vpon a sterne stede,
 And rod forth with gret randoun,
 And thoughte haue slawe fire Beuoun.
 With an vge mafnel
 Beues a-hite on the helm of stel,
 That Beues of Hamtoun, veraiment,
 Was astoned of the dent;
 What for care and for howe
 He lenede to his fadel bowe.
 Thanne com priken is sone Gii
 4330 To helpe his fader hastely,
 With a fwerd drawe in is hond,
 To that Lombard sone a-wond,
 And smot him so vpon the croun
 That man and hors he cleuede doun;
 The poynt fel on the pauiment,
 The fur sprong out after the dent.
 Thanne com ride is brother Mile,
 Among the peple in that while,
 Al tho that a-mighte reche
 4340 Ne dorste he neuer aske leche,
 For to hele ther is wonde,
 That he ne lai ded vpon the grounde.
 And whan Beues segh that fighte,
 In hertte he was glad and lighte,
 And thanked Jhesu our sauiour,
 That hadde sent him so gode fokour,

And egerliche withouten faile
 The grete peple he gan afaile.
 So meche folk was flawe and ded,
 4350 That al Temse was blod red ;
 The nombre was veraiment
 To and thretti thofent.
 And al fo fone fo hit was night,
 To the Ledene Halle thai wente right ;
 A-fette Jofian with faire meine
 To Londen to that riche cite,
 And helde a fette fourtene night
 To al that euer come aflight.

Tiding com to king Edgar
 4360 That Beues hadde his men forfare :
 For is borgeis in is cite
 He made del and gret pite,
 And feide, Ichauē leued me lif
 Longe withouten werre and strif,
 And now Icham fo falle in elde
 That I ne may min armes welde ;
 Twei fones Beues hath with him brought,
 Tharfore hit is in me thought
 Miles his fone me doughter take,
 4370 In this maner is pes to make.
 Thai grauntedē al with gode entent,
 And king Edgar Beues of fent,

And fire Saber and fire Gii,
 And fire Miles and fire Terry,
 And king Edgar Miles gan calle
 Before his barouns in the halle,
 And gaf him is doughter be the honde,
 And after is day al Ingelonde ;
 And pes and loue was maked thare,
 4380 Betwene Beues and king Edgare.
 The maide and Miles wer spused fame
 In the toun of Notingham.
 Ye witeth wel though I ne telle yow
 The feste was riale inow,
 Afe scholde be at swiche a spusing,
 And at the kinges couroning ;
 The feste leste fourtene night
 To al that euer come aplight,
 And at the fourtene night is ende,
 4390 Beues tok leue hom to wende
 At king Edgar and at Sabere ;
 And Miles is sone a-lefte here,
 And kiste and gaf him is bleffing,
 And wente to Mombraunt ther he was king ;
 And his erldom in Hamteschire
 A-gaf to his em Sabere ;
 And schipede at Hamtoun hastely,
 And with him wente his sone Gii,
 And Terry with is barnage.
 4400 The wind blew hardde with gret rage,

And drof hem in to Ermonie;
 Thar be lefte his fone Gii
 With his barouns gode and hende;
 And Terry to Aumberthe gan wende,
 And Beues wente withoute dwelling
 Into Mombraunt thar he was king;
 With him wente Jofian is quene,
 And leuede with oute treie and tene
 Twenti yer, fo faith the bok.

4410 Thanne fwiche fikneffe the leuedi tok,
 Out of this world fhe moſte wende;
 Gii, hire fone, fhe gan of fende,
 And Terry the riche king,
 For to ben at here parting.
 And whan thai were alle thare,
 To his ſtable Beues gan fare;
 Arondel a-fond thar ded,
 That euer hadde be gode at nede,
 Thar fore him was fwithe wo;

4420 In to chaumber he gan go,
 And fegh Jofian drawe to dede,
 Him was wo a-moſte nede;
 And er her body began to colde,
 In is armes he gan hire folde,
 And thar hii deide bothe i-fere.
 Here fone ne wolde in non manere
 That hii in erthe beried were.
 Of fein Lauarauns he let arere

